KHAN ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

KHAN ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN
A Centennial Tribute

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Preface

To commemorate the birth centenary of the distinguished Pakhtun leader, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Nehru Museum organized a seminar which was attended, among others, by Khan Abdul Wali Khan, the son of the Frontier Gandhi The papers presented at this seminar throw fascinating light upon the manner in which Ghaffar Khan discovered the power of non-violence, and its efficacy, on the one hand, in resolving feuds in Pathan society, and on the other, in organizing a powerful nationalist movement in the North-West Frontier Province

It gives me great pleasure in placing the papers presented at the afore-mentioned seminar, in the form of a book, before those interested in the subject I am confident this book will deepen our understanding of the life and thought of Ghaffar Khan, at the same time as it enriches our perception of the nationalist movement in India

I am beholden to Dr Hari Dev Sharma, Deputy Director of the Nehru Museum, for his assistance in bringing out this publication Others who assisted in this task include my colleagues Dr N Balakrishnan and Mrs Aruna Tandan

Nehru Museum — Ravinder Kumar
30 March 1995

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Life and Thought of Badshah Khan

Khan Abdul Wali Khan

To understand the real significance of Badshah Khan's movement, one has to go back in history and study the political, social and economic conditions in the North-West Frontier Province when he appeared on the scene. The traditions of Pathan society also need to be studied. One has even to go back to the times when the British arrived in India, not as a military power, but as traders in the name of the East India Company. Looking around, the British were overwhelmed by the resources and wealth of this vast country. They also took note of the weak Central Government at Delhi and of the numerous regional powers constantly involved in internal feuds, leading to wars. Looking at all this from their base in Calcutta, they could easily see that it would be definitely more profitable for them if they switched their activities from trade to conquering the country.

The British had arrived in India by sea. By turning round Gibraltar, they saw that the whole of North Africa was under the sway of Islam, then, on the European Mediterranean Coast they saw that Islam had come as far as the Balkan States. Then from there, it had extended its influence through Turkey and the Middle East right up to India. Significantly, there was the Muslim Ottoman Empire with

the Khilafat in Turkey The Central Government in India was also with the Muslims with the Mughal King at Delhi

One need not go into details as to how in the 19th century the British Government and its representatives in India went about consolidating their position and expanding their sphere of influence by means foul rather than fair — intrigues, bribes, deceit, and by playing one power against the other Betrayal of sacred trust was the hallmark of British diplomacy The Industrial Revolution, scientific knowledge, superior organizational skill, military strategy and superiority in arms paved the way for the British conquest of India Step by step the British advanced in this direction and by the later half of the 19th century they had consolidated their position and were in control of almost the whole of India

Now looking at the geographical situation, the British found India surrounded by seas Being a great naval power, they saw no threat to their empire in India from sea In the north the great Himalayas protected it and this protective wall extended to the west And, historically speaking, all the invaders attracted by the wealth of this 'golden bird'(سونے کی چڑیا) came by land routes through the passes in the north-west So it made the task of the British much easier and thus the north-west frontier of India was the only vulnerable frontier which had to be defended to protect the British Empire from any danger from that side

The British perceived the danger to its Indian Empire from the north because all along when they were busy conquering India bit by bit — they entered into Afghanistan even — the Russians under the Czars were advancing towards the East Therefore, Afghanistan became very crucial to the British policy of meeting the Russian threat Two Afghan wars were fought on the pretext of the Afghan Government agreeing to receive a Russian delegation Both the wars the British won, but later they were defeated and forced to quit Afghanistan The British, however, ultimately

succeeded in arriving at an agreement with Amir Abdur Rehman Khan, when they signed a treaty with him by drawing the Durand Line and keeping the passes and the invasion routes under their direct control to meet any threat to its empire from the Czarist Russia

The 'Great Game' of these two powers — Britain and Russia — continued till they met at the Oxus and signed a convention in 1907 to agree to the Oxus river as the geographical frontier between Russia and Afghanistan However, it was made quite clear to Russia that if she violated the sanctity of this frontier, then not only Afghanistan but the British also would take her on In those days the British 'Lion' was in its glory and the Russian 'Bear' was in no position to fight it And, thus, Afghanistan became a buffer state between these two powers The British spared no efforts to find ways and means of strengthening Khyber — the most strategic frontier of the British Empire — obviously to keep an eye on the Russian moves

Dealing with the internal situation in India, the British could easily see a threat to them from the far-flung Islam With occasional appeals for Pan-Islamic solidarity, the Ottoman Empire posed a real threat to the British Thus the Turkish Khilafat became their chief concern However, in the First World War Turkey was defeated and its empire was divided into several small states, all of them owing allegiance to the British Crown The Khilafat Movement started by Gandhiji and Maulana Mohamed Ali and his brother Shaukat Ali in support of the Turks was sabotaged by the British They realized the danger Hindu-Muslim unity posed to their rule in India and thus they decided to defeat it The good news from the Viceroy in Delhi to the Secretary of State in London on 1 January 1925 was "The bridge Gandhi had built to span the gulf between the Hindu and the Mohammedan has not only broken down, but I think it has completely disappeared "

The British knew that the Hindus were only confined to India and so they were much easier to be controlled

They had to be supported against the Muslims who ruled India, although in a minority And so started the game of 'Divide and Rule' The British supported one community against the other In 1905 Bengal was partitioned into two, creating Muslim and non-Muslim provinces, and then the system of separate electorate was introduced by the Morely-Minto Reforms

The rise of the Indian National Congress, its appeal to all communities, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and Parsis, and its secular approach to public questions posed a threat to British sovereignty Now the British saw in communal politics their only hope, and they concentrated on Muslim leadership, pointing out to their weak minority position in any future democratic set-up

The British heaved a sigh of relief by eliminating the external danger from the Khilafat Now they could relax and enjoy the benefits of the resources and wealth of India and also use its army to further annex territories to usher in an empire on which the sun never set

During the First World War a revolution overtook Russia where the Czarist monarchy was overthrown and a proletarian government took over The British were relieved to see the fall of Czarist Russia, hoping that the Russian Empire would disintegrate and it would pose no danger to their Indian Empire The Russian Revolution did not at all impress the British They felt that it had no chance whatsoever of succeeding All they conceded was that it could hold as long as its leader Lenin lived They were certain that his death would definitely mean the death of Communism

The British were really alarmed when they saw that the Russian Revolution continued its march even after Lenin, despite intrigues, sabotage and even trade sanctions Not only that, it further consolidated its position by fighting the economic sanctions and introducing a totally new concept of economic system of phased planned economy, exploiting Russia's natural resources, acquiring self-

sufficiency and, more importantly, catering to the needs of the entire population A totally new approach was adopted by which every individual shared the national wealth and thus a spirit of comradeship was created among the Russian people The revolution strove to establish a society based on the principle of "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs"

And when the revolution engulfed the whole of the Czarist Empire and came as near as Tashkent, Samarkand and Bokhara, the British got really alarmed because the Oxus river which was the geographical frontier before, also became an ideological frontier between the USSR and the British Empire The ideological front posed a bigger threat to the British as it had united the entire Russian population and brought them under a secular and democratic system

The British policy makers did not take long to realize that the position of the Oxus river as a geographical/ideological frontier had to be watched much more carefully now onwards The experts and wise heads started taking a more positive interest, particularly in the ideological threat After a thorough and exhaustive analysis, the British came to the conclusion that the only force that could effectively combat this threat was Islam — not the Islam of the Prophet but the Islam which would serve their imperialist interests The irony of it was that up till now it was the policy of the British imperialists to destroy the force of Islam But now it was the British colonialist who wanted to reestablish and rehabilitate Islam in this region to fight its ideological battle against Russian Communism As the British loved to call Communism the 'Godless Society' of the Bolsheviks

In 1901 Lord Curzon, the then Viceroy, separated the north-western areas from the Punjab and created the North-West Commissionerate with headquarters at Peshawar Lord Curzon was also quite right in pointing out that although the British Empire had scores of frontiers, this was the only 'frontier' where lay a greater danger to the British Empire from the Soviet Union Thus the British policy became

absolutely clear that these strategic passes and areas should be separated from Afghanistan and cut off from the rest of India These were to be treated as special areas, governed by different laws, and not to be exposed to political movements in other parts of India

It was in this geopolitical situation, that Badshah Khan came on the scene Badshah Khan was the son of a wealthy Khan He had an elder brother and two elder sisters Being the youngest, he was rather a spoilt child His father Behram Khan was uneducated, but he was a deeply religious person He sent his sons to English missionary schools He even permitted his eldest son Khan Sahib to proceed to England for medical studies As a young man Badshah Khan was greatly impressed by the selfless service of the English missionaries who had come to this part of the world to educate people not belonging either to their nation or religion

Badshah Khan's father had agreed to send him to England for studying engineering, but his mother put her foot down She argued that her elder son had gone to England to study medicine and there he married an English girl and became a *farangi* Therefore, she said that she had absolutely no intention of exposing her only other son to the danger of becoming a *farangi* So that was the end of his educational career The next best thing for the young men of wealthy Pakhtun families was to seek jobs in the British army, because that was something which suited their militant nature and manly qualities The father being an influential Khan had no difficulty in securing a military service for the young Abdul Ghaffar But fate had something else for him Before going for the interview for the job he visited a friend serving in the army The young Khan saw his friend being insulted by a British officer and that was the end of his ambition to serve in the army because of a threat to his self-respect He was also reminded of the bitter truth that the British were the rulers and the Indians slaves

With both careers blocked, the young Khan seriously started thinking of the human approach and selfless service of the English missionaries This inspiration and guidance and that too from a religious community cleared his way The missionaries were not serving their community or their co-religionists, they were serving humanity irrespective of caste, creed or religion The influence of religion was all pervading in the then prevailing social environment So that the young Khan made it to Deoband where a religious institution imparted the real essence of Islam to serve humanity It was also anti-British The teachers at the institution had a revolutionary approach and were whole-heartedly with the freedom movement and for the liberation of their motherland from the colonial yoke Some other scholars exiled from India were imprisoned in Malta Thus the young Khan came under the influence of the real Ulemas and not the bigoted and sectarian communalists

When the First World War ended, the British Government introduced the Rowlatt Bills in the central legislature The Indian nationalists considered the Bills a betrayal of the solemn pledge the British had made that India would be granted some sort of self-rule after the war Protest meetings were held throughout India The Pakhtuns up to that time had never heard of a public meeting However, a meeting was held in Utmanzai, Badshah Khan's ancestral village He presided over the meeting He says in his autobiography that no one had heard of public gatherings for political purposes and no one had any experience of public speaking He narrates the story of a Khan who could not even read a speech written for him, trembling and shaking all over When Badshah Khan asked him to read from the paper, he said he could not see the wretched writing and sat down The young Badshah Khan got his first taste of jail in these days He was well built, rather on the heavy side, and the fetters did not fit him They were forced on him with the result that they pierced into his flesh when he was made to walk sixteen miles from Charsadda to Peshawar to appear before a British officer Blood oozed out all along as he walked

Next came the Khilafat Movement He attended a Khilafat conference where a call was given for *hijrat* to Afghanistan He went to Afghanistan and met Ghazi Amanullah Khan who had fought against the British and had succeeded in extracting a treaty whereby Afghanistan was accepted as an independent sovereign state, free to have diplomatic relations with other countries

Looking around, Badshah Khan saw that Pakhtun society was suffering from internal bickerings, family feuds continued from generation to generation So he started his social reform programme to rid Pakhtun society of family feuds and shedding of innocent blood He exhorted his people to talk not through the barrel of a gun, but through mutual trust and brotherly love During this period he also noticed that lack of proper education let the Pakhtuns go astray To his surprise he found that local religious preachers, the Mullahs, opposed education in local schools — the reason being that they were run by the British who were Christians and they wanted to convert Muslim children to their faith The Khan tried to convince the Mullahs but to no effect It is at this point of time, the young Khan realized that there were other religious leaders also besides those at Deoband school

Therefore, he felt the need for a school free from government control so that the bigoted Mullahs' mouths could be shut And this is how the foundation of Azad Islamia School was laid to which in course of time schools from other parts of the province were affiliated The young Khan and his colleagues had to study the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet to counter the propaganda of the Mullahs

The British were watching the activities of the young Badshah Khan for reforming Pathan society by doing away with burdensome customs, by insisting on simple living and elimination of petty rivalries and family feuds He also wanted to lay the foundation of a healthy, prosperous and well-knit society through a network of Islamia Schools The

British became apprehensive and suspicious of this change in the most sensitive and strategically important area They had separated this area from Afghanistan, and yet here was this man strengthening the bonds of friendship with no less a person than the King of Afghanistan who had committed the greatest crime (by British standards) of establishing diplomatic relations with their arch enemy, the Soviet Union While the British were trying to encourage ethnic divisions by writing books about the differences between the Afghans and the Pathans, here was a man who in his own territory was preaching that the bonds that united the Pakhtuns were unbreakable The British were concentrating on playing up tribal rivalries by creating different political agencies for different tribes They discouraged common administration so that the tribes under these agencies were kept in watertight compartments On the other hand Badshah Khan declared that the Pakhtuns were like the trunk of a tree and the different tribes were its branches So the British game of politically dividing Afghanistan failed administratively too Similarly Badshah Khan sabotaged the British game of keeping these regions free of Indian influences The Rowlatt Bills agitation and the Khilafat Movement were clear indications of the direction in which the political wind was blowing Then there was emphasis on the true interpretation of Islam as against the one given by the British through the Mullahs for serving their imperialist interests The British also used Islam against the nationalist and secular approach of the Indian National Congress And above all, they 'educated' the Pakhtun youth, reminding them of their glorious past, how they had conquered and ruled over India and also parts of Iran

Probably the most difficult problem that Badshah Khan faced was to mould the militant nature of Pakthun society where a gun was picked up on the slightest provocation and where the only solution even to personal insult was violence The bloody feuds never ended and the spirit of vendetta continued for generations The most peculiar aspect

of all this was that even if a murderer was punished by a court, or even hanged, the aggrieved party's urge for a revenge was not satisfied until personal scores were settled This drew Badshah Khan's immediate attention And, as I have said earlier, he was under the influence of Islamic teachings, so that he had to argue his case from a religious point of view Therefore, he naturally referred to the teachings of the Holy Prophet and particularly to his early life in Mecca, in which there was a great emphasis on mutual respect, human sympathy, and especially, non-violence The Pakhtun was a great believer in Islam, but if its teachings clashed with his personal ego or tribal and social traditions, then he hardly paid any attention to what the scriptures or the Mullah said But Badshah Khan's case was different He was not a Mullah supported by society He was a Khan and his social reforms sanctioned by the teachings of the Holy Prophet had the desired effect A revolutionary change came over Pakhtun society when old enemies for generations embraced each other

The method adopted by Badshah Khan was different to that of the Mullahs They hardly practised what they preached He could afford to buy guns, could certainly employ a few armed guards, but he talked of non-violence and demonstrated it by his personal example This decidedly impressed the people When he asked them to lead a simple life, he first practised it himself Being a Hashtanagar Khan he could afford all sorts of luxuries, but there it was for everyone to see that they did not allure him His was a life of self-denial If he asked the people to wear Khaddar woven by a village weaver, he himself wore it first When he started Azad School in Utmanzai, he himself first sent his own son to that school and I have the honour of being its first student

The British could stand it no longer and they arrested Badshah Khan under Section 40 of the Frontier Crimes Regulation under which no court proceedings were held — no witnesses, no charge-sheet People were simply asked

to give an undertaking that they would bear good character, but good character was not defined And if they failed to give the undertaking, then they were sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment This was 1921 when a rigorous imprisonment meant rigorous imprisonment If the prisoner was declared to be an enemy of British rule, one can imagine his fate There was no such thing as a political prisoner in those days, everyone was treated as a criminal One has only to read Badshah Khan's own account of what he went through in those three years — the fetters that he had to wear, the 22 seers of grain that he had to grind, the food (unfit for human consumption) that he had to eat, horrible conditions in different jails where he was kept and the treatment by jail authorities The clothes meant for persons of normal height were too short for this hefty Pathan — 6 feet 3 inches tall In short, his own description proves that life was a hell on earth, to say the least

Badshah Khan completed his three years' jail term and came out as a physical wreck, but a more mature and healthy person mentally and spiritually Jail is a great place for retrospection Outside, one is constantly on the move Once you are confined to the four walls with no connection with the outside world, you are on your own internal resources If you can settle down and are at peace with your conscience, you are like muddy water in a glass where the mud settles down if you do not stir it and then everything clears up In jail you can judge objectively, reflect on the past and plan for the future That is exactly what the three years of jail-life did to Badshah Khan — new dedication, new zeal, and an urge to carry on the good work One thing that Badshah Khan felt while in jail was that the Pashto language did not have either a newspaper or a magazine So that he resolved to fill the vaccum That is how he started his Pashto magazine, *Pakhtun* It is incredible how every aspect of society attracted his attention It seems unbelievable today how single-handed he brought the Pakhtun nation closer to the rest of India The *Pakhtun*

magazine had an admirable effect across the border — in Afghanistan It attracted the attention of Amanullah Khan who ordered the publication of a similar magazine in Pashto He also ordered everyone to learn to speak Pashto (the court language in Afghanistan till then was Persian or Dari) The King himself started learning Pashto and before long he could easily converse in it This was another link the British did not approve of

In the year 1929 when the Indian National Congress held its annual session in Lahore Till then Badshah Khan's connection with Indian politics was through the Khilafat Committee only In 1929 a large number of Pakhtun young men went to Lahore They were deeply impressed by the Congress organization, particularly by its volunteer corps which looked after the arrangements in an organized and disciplined manner What impressed these young Pakhtuns most was the women wing of the volunteer corps It was their first contact with Indian politics There they saw with their own eyes that not only men but women also had decided to fight for freedom Male chauvinism worked and it did not take them long to decide to form a volunteer organization Badshah Khan proposed to call this organization 'Khudai Khidmatgar' (Servants of God) Their creed was that as God does not require any service, a Servant of God must serve His creation They believed in the true Islamic teachings that humanity includes everyone without any distinction of caste, creed or colour Service above self was their motto They took a solemn pledge to accept non-violence as a creed It may surprise many in India that Badshah Khan had accepted non-violence as a creed long before he came into contact with Gandhiji

During Badshah Khan's imprisonment, the management of Azad School carried on their work, particularly the annual function of the school in Utmanzai to which people from all parts of the province came Dramas were staged for the benefit of the illiterate majority The *Pakhtun* introduced a new trend not only in prose but also in poetry The

mushaira was a part of the annual function where significant departure was made from the usual *mushairas* Now greater emphasis was laid on the patriotic sentiments of the audience and less on praising flowers or the *bulbul* or the beauty of the beloved National issues were brought to the fore The 1930 annual prize distribution function of the school had an additional attraction as the people saw thousands of Khudai Khidmatgars in their red uniforms, with their bagpipes and drums, parading in a strict military style This fascinated them, particularly the youth

The British could not take it any more They could not afford to let this kind of political organization and activity continue in India, particularly in a sensitive and strategically important province like the NWFP Therefore, they arrested Badshah Khan and some of his colleagues on the morrow of the meeting in Utmanzai and sent them to Gujrat Jail in the Punjab Hell was let loose on the people The NWFP seemed to have been handed over to the army who beseiged most of the villages in Charsadda The police arrested the volunteers, looted their houses and burnt down their offices The cavalry broke protest meetings Young men were trampled over by charging horses The police resorted to firing, killing people cold bloodedly There was a total blockade of the province and no news was allowed to trickle in across the Indus river The colleagues of Badshah Khan apprised him from outside of this brutal and inhuman treatment by 'civilized' *farangis,* trying to crush the people The people had no help from anywhere In these circumstances he advised them to seek the help of their Muslim brethern in other parts of India They reported back to him that they went to Muslim League leaders and apprised them of police atrocities only to be told that they could not help them because they were fighting the mighty British The League leaders also told them that their organization was there only to protect them against the Hindus Having been let down by the League, they met Congress leaders who made some enquiries The Congress

leaders were assured that the Khudai Khidmatgar movement was for all practical purposes a social movement, but it was against British domination The crucial question the Congress leaders asked of the frontier leaders was as to how did they conduct themselves The Congress leaders were really surprised when they were told that every Khudai Khidmatgar had to solemnly pledge that he accepted non-violence as a creed After this assurance, the Congress agreed to co-operate with the Frontier leaders Immediately an enquiry committee was appointed Vithalbhai Patel, the then President of the Central Assembly, was its President The committee was not allowed to enter the NWFP so that they sat at Rawalpindi That is how for the first time India and for that matter the world learnt about the happenings across the Indus The government banned the Patel Committee report

In 1930, satyagraha was launched in India It ended with the signing of the Gandhi-Irwin pact under which all prisoners except Badshah Khan were released Gandhiji put his foot down and informed the Viceroy that the pact was no pact if it did not cover Badshah Khan The Viceroy tried very hard to convince him that the Pathan, violent by nature, believed in the rule of the gun The Red Shirt movement was based on violence and organized on Bolshevik lines The British tried their utmost to keep the Frontier out of bounds for Indian politics, but the two great leaders, Badshah Khan and Gandhiji, decided to meet the challenge This helped create an atmosphere against the British policy of encouraging communal politics, dubbing the Indian National Congress as a Hindu organization — serving the interests of the Hindus at the expense of the Muslims Badshah Khan came from a province comprising 93 per cent Muslims and the co-operation between the Indian National Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars cut right across the British scheme of dividing Hindus and Muslims and created a very healthy atmosphere of communal harmony

The spirit of comradeship between Hindus and Muslims further gained strength when Badshah Khan, after another imprisonment, was not allowed to go to his province and his entry even into the Punjab was banned Thus at the invitation of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, Badshah Khan and his elder brother Dr Khan Sahib went to Wardha This gave Gandhiji and his colleagues in the Congress a chance to know Badshah Khan more intimately and refute the British campaign to malign him They wanted to create a wedge between the Congress leadership and Badshah Khan He could not sit idle As he was not allowed to go to his province, he decided to go to Bengal and work amongst the Muslims there. He discussed this matter with Muslim leaders led by H S Suhrawardy and Khwaja Nazimuddin When he found that none of them would accompany him, he asked them to give him an interpreter who could translate what he wanted to tell the people The Muslim leadership did not oblige On the contrary they tried to discourage him by saying that time was not opportune to tour those areas as there were lots of mosquitoes and consequent danger of malarial infection Badshah Khan would not give up his tour easily Finally, Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, a member of the Congress Working Committee, accompanied him to the 'mosquito infested' area They were quite encouraged by the response of the people, but they had to curtail their tour as they had to go to Bombay to attend the annual session of the Congress There was a proposal to elect Badshah Khan the President of the Congress Babu Rajendra Prasad offered to step down in his favour, but he did not agree saying that he was a humble worker and a servant of the people However, the Congress named the venue of the Congress session after him

The British were getting rather worried about Badshah Khan's tour of Bengal, particularly about his work amongst the Muslims there He was again arrested and tried for a speech he had delivered at a Christian gathering and was given two years' imprisonment

Badshah Khan was at Wardha when the 1935 Act was announced The Frontier was given a full provincial status and was brought at a par with the other provinces of India In those days, it had only one member in the Central Assembly The candidature of Dr Khan Sahib was announced to contest the seat while he was at Wardha He won the election and was permitted to enter the province

The Khudai Khidmatgars fought the provincial elections held under the 1935 Act without their leader Badshah Khan and made a wonderful job of it They routed the Nawabs, the Khans, the title-holders and the Jagirdars The British installed Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum as the Premier of the province, but as soon as the Congress decided to accept office, a vote of no confidence was passed against the Sahibzada ministry and Dr Khan Sahib took over as Premier Badshah Khan was permitted to come to the province after the elections The British officers complained that the Sahibzada ministry was voted out because of Badshah Khan's presence

The provincial elections in India decisively proved that the Congress was the only organized party in the country It had eight duly elected provincial governments out of a total of 11 The worry of the British was that the Frontier had gone with the Congress They really got scared because the danger to their Empire had come from within It was clear now that if the elections to the Central Assembly were held, undoubtedly the Congress would get an absolute majority The British decided to organize the Muslim League to meet the threat from the Congress They encouraged the Muslim League leadership to demand equal status with the Congress although the League did not have a government in any province It was an absurd demand that the Muslim League should be accepted as the sole representative of the Indian Muslims Lord Wavell was hell bent on this idea when he called Indian Leaders' Conference in Simla in 1945 When Dr Khan Sahib objected to this

and said that he was the Premier of a province with 93 per cent Muslims and he did not belong to the Muslim League, what could the Viceroy or the Muslim League say to that

I do not want to go into the details of pre-partition manipulations of British imperialists They are very recent events and I have dealt with them in detail in my book *Facts are Facts* But one thing is certain that Badshah Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars did not fit into British scheme of things The British wanted the military Crescent of Islam starting from Turkey, Iraq, Iran and the fortress of Islam — Pakistan — to put around the neck of the Soviet Union to keep it across the Oxus And, secondly, Badshah Khan was with the secular Congress and did not fit into the internal policies of the Muslim League With his base in a province with the largest Muslim majority in the country, he cut right across the British scheme It was this very province of Badshah Khan which faced the Soviet Union, Britain's arch enemy, on the border of India where the main strategic passes were located Thus Badshah Khan became the main target of the British and the Muslim League's attack

Anyhow the British succeeded in partitioning India on religious basis And in the words of Badshah Khan 'we were thrown to the wolves' Independence came, the British left this country but the policy of using Pakistan as a fortress of Islam remained Badshah Khan, a nationalist and a secular democrat, was not acceptable to our lords and masters The freedom fighters who had made supreme sacrifices for the liberation of their motherland became traitors and definitely and decidedly faced more hardships and humiliations in the country for whose liberty they had struggled and suffered The Khan Sahib ministry was dismissed within a week of the creation of Pakistan by Governor-General Mohamed Ali Jinnah, although it had the support of 33 members in the provincial assembly He did not bring in the Governor's rule but on the contrary installed a Muslim

League ministry which had the support of 17 members only He had to clear the decks and change the loyalty of elected representatives Badshah Khan and several of his trusted colleagues were arrested And then took place the massacre at Babra (in Charsadda) where 600 freedom fighters were mowed down at a public meeting Reign of terror was let loose, houses were looted, properties were confiscated, jails were filled to capacity and the sanctity of Pakhtun homes was violated The atrocities and humiliations inflicted on the freedom fighters were greater than those inflicted by the British when we were fighting to throw them out of our country There was no resistance on the part of the Khudai Khidmatgars now No agitation, no civil disobedience, no confrontation against the government Badshah Khan was kept in jail for six long years without being produced in a court of law Twice I banged the doors of the court against my detention My entire property had been confiscated, even my furniture had been taken away There never was a trial and my two attempts to request the court to ask the government at least to give me the grounds of my detention never succeeded Besides keeping Badshah Khan in solitary confinement in the Punjab jails, false propaganda was let loose that he was an agent of Hindu India, an enemy of the Muslims and a traitor to Islamic Pakistan And the jail authorities were serving their country and Islam when they made his life miserable in jail

But the stories that we heard after our release made us forget what we had gone through Just to narrate two incidents The sexually pervert Chief Minister Qaiyum Khan could see that a Pakhtun would not submit to violence so that he ordered that the Pakhtun code of purdah should be violated The Muslim League volunteers, accompanied by the police, would break into any house without asking the *pardanishin* women to vacate the house — a very grave provocation A young Khudai Khidmatgar had been just married A week after his marriage, some volunteers and

the police arrived to arrest him After having looted everything in the house, they saw the bride in her wedding suit They asked her to hand over her bridal suit When the young girl told them that they had taken all her clothes, how could she change, she was threatened that if she did not hand over her bridal dress, they would strip her off themselves Then she asked a neighbour for a change of clothes When she wanted to go to the neighbour's house to change, the gang of Qaiyum Khan declared that if she could strip herself off before her husband who was a Hindu agent, why could she not strip herself off before them who were at least Muslims

How seriously a Pakhtun takes this purdah violation is amply illustrated by what follows I was released after six years by the Federal Court because there was no order of detention on that particular day when I filed my habeas corpus And when I got back a young man came and gave me an envelop saying that that was left by his father to be given after his death to Badshah Khan I opened the envelop but could not get to the end of what this disciple of Badshah Khan had written He stated that he had been a Khudai Khidmatgar and had been to jail in 1930-31 and 1942 struggles against the British He had also written that they beat them put them in jail, tortured them but never humiliated them They never violated the sanctity of their purdah house He further added "Now we have achieved freedom for our motherland, but the other day Muslim League volunteers in green uniform, accompanied by the police, walked straight into my *zenana* without any warning I saw all this with my own eyes In the normal circumstances, I would have picked up my gun and finished the intruders I would have even gone to Peshawar to settle scores with this Qaiyum, but I am a Khudai Khidmatgar and I am under solemn pledge that I will stick to non-violence despite all provocations I could never imagine that I would be confronted with a situation like this I know that I cannot take it any more I have promised you that

I will not pick up my gun but my Pakhtu honour has been shattered I have, therefore, decided to end my life I crave your forgiveness because I have not been able to fight this onslaught, and then the forgiveness of my Creator, because according to Islam it is sin to take one's own life Please pray for me " Just look at the commitment and dedication of this man Gandhiji has said this several times in his speeches and conversations that his non-violence was the non-violence of the brave and the courageous, of the one who had the means and the courage to commit violence and yet he was non-violent That is why Gandhiji often remarked that Badshah Khan's feat of converting the Pathans to the creed of non-violence was nothing short of a miracle The real meaning of what Gandhiji tried to put across dawned on me when I read the letter of that Khudai Khidmatgar with tears in my eyes Stupid and selfish governments destroy the very force which can bring stability, dignity and honour to a country

And when Qaiyum Khan failed in breaking the will and determination of the people, their devotion and loyalty to their organization, and when they refused to join the Muslim League, another method was adopted Our party office-bearers were arrested, their faces blackened, they were stripped naked and paraded in the village Not only that, then those freedom fighters and honourable men were taken into their *zenanas* by the police for the women folk to see Their mothers, sisters, wives, daughters and daughters-in-law were made to witness their humiliation

The Pakistan Government had blockaded the province as the British had done in 1930, but this time there was no Congress to come to their rescue, there was no Vithalbhai Patel to prepare his report and mobilize the enlightened world opinion on the atrocities committed Badshah Khan has complained that they had been 'thrown to the wolves', but even the wolf would bite and tear you to pieces, he would not humiliate and dishonour you and your women folk

These are the kinds of difficulties Badshah Khan and his dedicated and disciplined Khudai Khidmatgars had to go through He had to spend more years in jail and detention in Pakistan then he had spent during British rule The Khudai Khidmatgar movement is still under ban in Pakistan Publication of Badshah Khan's Pashto magazine *Pakhtun* was banned immediately after partition Our central office (Markazi Alia) at Sardaryab was dynamited and razed to the ground The official note said that it was not a party office but part of a temple where Badshah Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars worshipped idols and two idols had been found there

And yet Badshah Khan's indomitable will, spiritual power and courage to stand up and suffer for his convictions and not to surrender to evil has steeled his followers The sons and grandsons of those noble and shining specimen of Pakhtun manhood still cherish these ideals and are still struggling to establish and sustain what is known as 'Badshah Khan Revolution'

A revolutionary change has taken place in the world, particularly in this region With the end of the Cold War and elimination of the Soviet Union as a super power and as a threat to American interests, the global fears and apprehensions are receding Gandhiji and Badshah Khan's message of love and peace is now universally accepted as the only hope for the survival of mankind Their message is considered the foundation for the happiness and prosperity of a world where everyone, irrespective of the colour of his skin, is entitled to a dignified survival, where every member of the human race is treated as a member of a vast family with equal rights and opportunities

Would it be asking too much that all sensible and rational people go back to Gandhiji and Badshah Khan's secular, democratic and human-loving teachings so that the wounds inflicted by suspicion and hatred could be healed and foundation laid for a more civilized and sane approach to the problems facing us all today

2

Some Significant Aspects of Badshah Khan's Life

Khurshed Alam Khan

The splendid and heroic figure of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan dominated the scene of Indian struggle for freedom at a crucial time which coincided with the Gandhian era He became soon a symbol of service, sacrifice and courage which made his life an inspiring saga of the triumph of higher spirit over brutal force The history of our national movement wrought many wonders, but no wonder was greater than the exciting transformation of the fiery Pathans into peaceful Khudai Khidmatgars, eschewing violence and devoting all energies for a social change to uplift the highlanders Again, it was this great leader who struggled all his life to secure for his people political freedom, social freedom, economic freedom, freedom from hate, from superstition and from ignorance In this paper an attempt is made to present some glimpses of his thoughts and deeds

In his scheme of things political freedom came first The hunger of his soul was to win freedom for his people The Pathans are intensely freedom loving race and resent any kind of subjugation The greatness of Badshah Khan was that he desired to link the freedom of the Pathans with the freedom of the country He worked hard to harmonize

his concept of freedom with the concept of the great national leaders of India At a time when communal forces insisted on the division of India, he stood solid like a rock for the integrity and unity of the country

Badshah Khan had the vision to see the unifying forces in the land He would say, "You and we have more things in common than we know "[1] The presence of Buddhism for centuries in the Frontier region, the influence of Sanskrit on Pashto language, the association of Pannini, the great Sanskrit grammarian, with these parts, the location of the great Buddhist university at Taxila, and the derivation of the words 'Indus' and 'Hindu' from the Pashto word 'sind' meaning river, all indicate the unity of Indian culture

His interest in politics was first aroused by his visit to Deoband in 1914 and by the constant study of Maulana Azad's *Al-Hilal*, leaving his children to the care of his mother, he dedicated his life to serve his people, to unite them, to reform them, to educate them and to organize them In recognition of his services the Khans of Hashtanagar called him their 'Badshah', the name by which he is generally known He plunged himself deep into politics after the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, for which he was arrested and lodged in the Peshawar Jail His first contact with Gandhiji was during the days of the Khilafat Movement, when he was much influenced by such great leaders as Maulana Azad, Ali Brothers, Hakim Ajmal Khan and others He was present at the mammoth Nagpur session of the Congress in 1920, where non-violence was accepted as the Congress creed Jinnah was also present in that session Badshah Khan could perceive the trend of thought in Jinnah, and observed, "Is it possible for us to stand on the same platform after this creed [of non-violence] is passed, one saying that he wants to keep the British connection and another that he does not want it?"[2]

Badshah Khan's hectic social and political activity frightened the authorities who sentenced him to three years' rigorous imprisonment on 17 December 1921[3] He was made

to grind 20 seers of corn every day When the jailor desired to substitute wheat flour for corn on condition not to let this be known to the Superintendent, or else he would be dismissed, Badshah Khan said, "I do not want you to lose your job give me corn to grind I cannot tell a lie "[4]

The period from 1924-29 was a testing time when communal passions disturbed the entire land He refused to be drawn into the surging passions On the other hand, he engaged himself in more useful work The year 1929 witnessed the formation of Khudai Khidmatgars The purpose was to make the Pakhtuns take to the service of their community and the country in the name of God This organization was unique in many respects They called themselves as Servants of God and pledged themselves to give up blood feuds, to undertake to educate their children, to be kind to their women, to reduce marriage expenses, to oppose all oppressors, and to observe full non-violence They bound themselves to purity, honesty and integrity in their personal life They took a pledge, "I shall never use violence, I shall not retaliate or take revenge I shall not be a party to any intrigue, family feuds and enmity I shall be fearless and be prepared for any sacrifice "[5]

They called themselves an army of God to draw inspiration from faith Freedom was their goal Service, sacrifice, non-violence and discipline were their weapons Soon its units spread all over the province From a small number of 500 in December 1929 it rose to 3,000,000 within two or three years They rendered free service and paid even for their uniforms They had their own flag, bands, bagpipes and drums They helped the villagers in their need, but they bore no arms, not even a lathi They aimed at teaching the Pakhtuns self-reliance, self-respect, dignity of labour and the fear of God, which 'banishes all fear '

When the authorities wanted to win Badshah Khan over by promise of reforms in his region, he declined the offer and said, "I was not a hypocrite and the British were not dependable, we must not go back on our promise to the

Congress and we are morally bound to stand by it "[6] Under his leadership the Pathans launched a bloodless revolution The authorities let loose a lava of repression but that did not dampen their spirits They were mercilessly beaten An eyewitness said, "Not even a donkey can bear it "[7] But they bore the blows and even bullets with amazing patience and courage Badshah Khan had injected into them implicit faith in God, intense passion for freedom and fearlessness, together with a new element of non-violence and perfect balance between religious faith and national ideals

The authorities resorted to a new strategy Instructions were issued to all the Chief Secretaries and Chief Commissioners on 16 January 1932, "It is of particular importance to let it be known to Muslims in conversation or otherwise that the Red Shirt movement is essentially a Congress movement "[8] The India League Deputation visited India in 1932 Their report entitled *Condition of India* says, "The severity of the repression has produced something like a state of war on the Frontier That non-violence against the persons of British officials still remains the rigidly observed rule of the nationalist movement in an area where arms are so readily obtainable, and in fact are openly and usually owned by the villagers, is a tribute to the sincerity with which the creed has been embraced "[9] The British did not hesitate to resort to air-bombing the tribal areas in order to enforce their design of 'peace' in the region

The popularity of Badshah Khan could be guessed by the note Home Secretary, M G Hallett, wrote in August 1934 "It was important to note that he was regarded as something of a deity and the water from a well which was constructed at his suggestion was regarded as a cure for many evils and was carried for very long distances by the people "[10] Such respect he commanded even from Gandhiji as to make him speak of the Khan Brothers' friendship as 'a gift from God '[11] But the authorities could hardly reconcile themselves to such a situation, and they remarked, "In the first non-cooperation movement Gandhi

bottled the Ali Brothers Now he is doing likewise to the Khan Brothers "'[12]

In reality Badshah Khan had become a source of attraction to all because of the inner beauty of the Pathan character which was very childlike in innocence with the virtues and failings of children The Pathans have a certain simplicity and sincerity which commands the respect and regard of one and all Their love of freedom is something fierce and unquenchable They are amenable to friendship They would do almost anything for those whom they consider their friends Their power of endurance is phenomenal In the Waziristan operations the Goverment showered bombs on them Panditji having toured the Frontier remarked, "The whole of India has reason to be proud of these Frontier people "[13]

Badshah Khan inculcated not only love of liberty among the Pathans, which was channelized in the right direction, but also undertook constructive programme by which their economic, social and educational conditions could be improved His politics itself was subordinate to his movement for social reforms He first took to the spread of education As early as 1910 he opened schools in the villages The first school was in his own village, Utmanzai He accepted the presidentship of the Peshawar Khilafat Committee only on condition that all collections of the province should go for the educational activities of the province [14] Under the pressure of the government when his father attempted to dissuade him from this task, he asked his father, "Supposing all the other people ceased to take interest in the *namaz,* would you ask me to give it up and forsake my duty?"

"Certainly not" was the reply "Well, then, father, this work of imparting national education is like that If I may give up my *namaz,* I may give up the school As *namaz* is a duty, so also the education and service of the people is a duty "

Education was only an instrument for his social reforms, which frightened the authorities They wanted him to tender an apology and an assurance that he would not organize the Pathans for social reforms He would not give it up He was arrested and sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment

Yet another very significant aspect of his thought and action was to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity He spoke passionately at Bardoli against those who have "reduced Islam to a matter of *houris* and *ghilmas* "[15] Islam, he emphasized, means submission to the will of God, serving Him through service of his creatures, irrespective of caste, creed or colour, and striving ceaselessly for truth and justice He exhorted both Hindus and Muslims not to get excited over trivial things such as music before a mosque or cutting the leaves of a *pipal* tree Speaking to Muslims in Bombay in April 1931, he said, " you have forgotten the teaching of your Prophet *Jehad* is to say the truth before the tyrant kings The Congress is trying to free us all This flag of freedom ought to have been in the hands of the Muslims, we should have led the movement and the nations of the world should have followed us "[16] At Bardoli he said that the mission of Islam was to free the oppressed, to feed the poor and to clothe the naked The Congress was attempting to do that job "And, therefore, the work of the Congress is nothing but the work of the Prophet, nothing inconsistent with Islam Seeing this as clearly as day-light, I really do not understand how Muslims can remain aloof from the Congress "[17]

Badshah Khan cautioned the people of the influences that divided the communities He said, "You in India are familiar with cry of the Afghan bogy We have been made familiar of late with the cry of a Hindu rule — a rule of the rich Hindu, of the educated Hindu, of the nationalist Hindu To those who come to warn me against a Hindu rule, I say, perhaps, it may be better to be slaves under a neighbour than under a perfect stranger!"[18]

Badshah Khan was very liberal in his outlook. He thought that the Hindus "are no less *Ahl-e-Kitab* than Jews and Christians."[19] He was a deeply religious man and yet rational to think that "each faith takes the colour and flavour of the soil from which it springs."[20] Mahadev Desai observes "... I have the privilege of having a number of Muslim friends, true as steel and ready to sacrifice their all for Hindu-Muslim unity, but I do not yet know one who is greater than or even equal to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in the transparent purity and the ascetic severity of his life, combined with extreme tenderness and living faith in God."[21] Brave, hardy, imaginative and noble, he deserves to be *remembered not merely as 'Fakhr-e-Afghan' but also as* 'Fakhr-e-Hind' or Pride of India.

Badshah Khan felt that the partition of the country was a wrong step. It came as a great disappointment to him, as the very concept of two-nation theory was repugnant to his life-long philosophy of unity and national integration. In fact, all that he had wished for and hoped for had turned out to be a shattered dream. But in spite of disappointment and dejection, he continued to carry on his life's mission to serve his people. No doubt the circumstances after partition placed him in the most unenviable situation, but he refused to compromise as regards his ideals, political philosophy, and convictions. Consequently, he suffered innumerable hardships, exiles and long spells of imprisonment.

We should take interest in the study of Badshah Khan's life, thoughts, deeds and socio-economic philosophy in relation to our turbulent times. Our present society is plagued with strifes and confrontations of all kinds, and Khan Saheb's memory in these circumstances can be a morally uplifting experience. Great moments of history are not those when empires are built, but those when noble thoughts for good of common people gain currency and acceptability. Badshah Khan condemned lip service to great ideals of truth, and preached law of love, way of love, purity

of thought, action and motive Badshah Khan stands for the finest in the Pathan character as seen in his intense passion for freedom, implicit faith in God, indomitable courage, boldness and fearlessness He had implicit faith in non-violence as enunciated by Gandhiji Hence, we may say that the life of Badshah Khan is a proof of the dictum that the best witness to God's truth are those who show its light in their lives, and that the imagination of the pure sees the truth

References

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12 *Ibid*, p 172
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3

Badshah Khan: His Message and Personality

Sadiq Ali

There are good reasons why we should keep alive in our hearts the memory of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's unique contribution to India's struggle for freedom and, in fact, the whole human civilization Let us first look at the earliest period of his public life He attempted the social awakening of his people who, with all the qualities they possessed, had become timid and spineless where foreign rulers were concerned and were also helpless victims of several evil customs which weakened them in many ways Just like Gandhiji he instinctively thought of starting a journal to make his people aware of what was seriously wrong with them and also to widen their outlook by acquainting them with what was happening in the world outside In all this he encountered fierce resistance from the government of the day, that is, the British rulers He could himself face any heavy punishment, but he had also to prepare his people for bravely enduring all the hardships that came their way in the course of their awakening The alien rulers were determined to scotch every kind of awakening among them How were the people and, in particular, the Khudai Khidmatgars to face the ruthless persecution of the rulers? Here came a part of the unique contribution of Khan Abdul

Ghaffar Khan He taught them the way of *sabr* (patience) Let the people cheerfully take the punishment however harsh it might be and leave it to God to deal out proper punishment to the evil-doer *Sabr* was another name for non-violence The inspiration for this 'patience' he derived from the *Koran* and the life of the Prophet In the early phase of Islam the Prophet and his followers were persecuted and tortured in a variety of ways, but they bore them all with 'patience' They did not retaliate The silent suffering and non-retaliation by Khudai Khidmatgars brought out the religious or spiritual element in Khan Saheb's character He declared himself to be a devout Muslim In his later growth Khan Saheb drew a lot of inspiration from Gandhiji and his truth and non-violence, but in his earlier phase the non-violence of Khan Saheb was in a considerable measure his own independent response to the totality of circumstances surrounding his effort to rouse and awaken his people This religious inspiration of Khan Saheb raises a larger issue of the place of religion in the political and social awakening of India Religion can serve both constructive and high ends as well as destructive and evil ones

A new chapter opens in Khan Saheb's life when he comes close to the Congress and its struggle for freedom The Congress with its larger goals and wedded to peaceful and non-violent ways to achieve freedom had no difficulty in attracting the loyalty of Khan Saheb and his unique organization of Khudai Khidmatgars Once caught in India's struggle for freedom he played a significant role in the general awakening of the country Some heroic deeds of Khudai Khidmatgars are known to us all and deserve to be known by later generations also

It was inevitable that Badshah Khan should come into close contact with Gandhiji, his entire philosophy of life and his wide-ranging constructive programme Here it is significant how a devout Muslim and a devout Hindu could think the same way on vital matters When the core of

religion or various religions is touched and respected, there is no escape from unity and harmony Differences may exist only at non-essential levels

Khan Saheb's conversion to khadi and village industries and numerous other elements of Gandhi's constructive programme was another element in the growth of his outlook His devotion to Hindu-Muslim unity or communal harmony was his own and integral part of the religion he professed For his Muslim countrymen he was at pains to show how tolerant and broad-minded the Prophet was when he handled matters jointly touching Muslims and people of other creeds Many situations developed in the country during India's struggle for freedom and also later when he administrated his healing touch as a devout advocate of communal harmony

The great achievement of Badshah Khan lay not just in his own close attachment to non-violence and peaceful methods of resistance to wrong It lay especially in the spell he cast on his own people in the North-West Frontier Province who were for all practical purposes strangers to the creed of non-violence and what it all implied It was a phenomenon which astonished the whole country It also made Gandhiji curious to know how it all happened This curiosity led him to visit the Frontier Province more than once not for doing any propaganda but for seeing at close quarters the large scale conversion of a war-like people to non-violence He saw the reverence in which Khan Saheb was held by most sections of the people and of course his own Khudai Khidmatgars His own personal life, his austere simplicity, his courage and fearlessness, his disdain for pomp, his readiness to face any hardship that came his way in the pursuit of his goals was, Gandhiji could easily see, a potent source of inspiration to his people He ceaselessly worked to educate them His speeches were mostly in simple Pashto Every word he uttered he meant It was not eloquence which charmed and conquered his people but his utter sincerity and truthfulness In several ways he convinced his people that in non-violence or

peaceful resistance to wrong lay their deliverance During his stay in their midst Gandhiji brought out the deeper meaning of non-violence as a way of life in diverse spheres

Badshah Khan declined the offer to be the President of the Congress This was significant No leading Congressman, Hindu, Muslim or belonging to any other community, would have declined or wished to decline the offer Badshah Khan had no taste for power, even the largely *Satwik* kind of power which Congress Presidentship implied in those days The challanges his people faced in the Frontier very much occupied his mind To no small extent also the communal discord in India and the gross poverty which was the lot of our people in rural areas

Possibly the hardest trial in his life came when the partition of India took place Apart from the larger goal of India's freedom his aim of having free or autonomous Pakhtunistan seemed to be slipping away from him or becoming more and more difficult of realization The basis of Pakistan as conceived by the Muslim League did not make the slightest appeal to him He would fain have autonomous Pakhtunistan in free India but he was full of fear and foreboding about its fate in Pakistan

Both the Muslim League and the British Government were advocates of plebiscite Why plebiscite in the Frontier Province alone when other provinces could decide the question of partition through their legislatures? The Congress could say no to the plebiscite proposal, but it dared not say it Its no, as things stood, would have meant the collapse of the Cabinet Mission plan which was rightly or wrongly designed to preserve the unity of India and which the Congress had accepted A fair plebiscite in the abnormal conditions which prevailed in the North-West Frontier Province was an impossibility The communal upsurge and the unabashed misuse of the governmental machinery brought about a situation in which Badshah Khan advised non-participation in the plebiscite

A whole new set of challanges confronted Badshah Khan and his followers when the Frontier Province became part

of Pakistan With all the grief and agony the partition caused him, he loyally accepted Pakistan as his country and was anxious to play his part in creating a just social order in his new country Equally he was anxious that he should get his Pakhtunistan in a free and democratic Pakistan We all know how both his dreams — a reasonably good democracy and Pakhtunistan — remained unrealized He was also not happy with quite a few things happening in India The source of the unhappiness was his continued adherance to the great dreams he had cherished during India's struggle for freedom The struggle for power in Pakistan and the way it was conducted left him no option but to remain in a state of almost permanent opposition to the wielders of power This is not what he wanted and yearned for As a man of peace he would have very much liked to put his undoubted talents to the service of Pakistan and its growth as a good democracy He made a few serious efforts in this direction both when Jinnah was alive and in later years Pakistan, however, could not digest him For Badshah Khan also, so deep were his old convictions and so closely wedded he was to certain principles of individual and social conduct, it was not possible to move away from the straight and narrow path It is this which is the source of his greatness and perennial inspiration to his countrymen both in India and Pakistan and to mankind Further, his sphere of activity was Pakistan and to an extent free India, too, but the message of his life has a wider reach His strength and appeal did not lie in his intellectual attainments which a few among us can achieve, they lay essentially in his rectitude of conduct and faith in principles of human brotherhood, equality, tolerance, fellow feeling, truth and non-violence However, our high technological or other achievements, will not bring peace and happiness to mankind unless these are accompanied by some basic principles of civilized living This is the broad message of Badshah Khan's long and eventful life

4

Badshah Khan: Islam and Non-Violence

Shrinivas Rao S Sohoni

This paper is primarily based on impressions gained from personal meetings with Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in the period May-July 1987 in Bombay Badshah Khan was at that time under medical treatment and convalescing after a prolonged illness Resting in bed, in equable if not in cheerful spirits, Badshah Khan would respond to questions put by this writer He seemed to find it soothing to talk, and the doctors endorsed his conversing from time to time in brief spells as a form of therapy and to divert his mind from the aches and pains in his body He spoke feelingly on many subjects the purpose, if any, of life, the use and significance of prayer, what real prayer is, religion, politics, critical moments in the course of the struggle for freedom, Mahatma Gandhi, British policy, leadership of the masses, Pakistan — its people, its leaders and the predilections of its government, the problem of poverty, stratified society, of what the youth should do, *et al*

This was invaluable exposure to the reflections of a unique and fascinating personality, a profoundly advanced human being, yet simple, almost childlike, a man of marvellous, indeed, heroic courage, able to sustain and transcend intense and prolonged suffering, yet deeply injured and pained

within, a yogi in his mien of detachment and renunciation of worldly things, yet completely absorbed in and immersed in the conditionalities of human existence, a devout and meticulous Muslim, strict to the point of being severe in observance of the Islamic ethic enjoined by the *Qur'aan Sharief* and the *Hadith*, yet fully perceptive about the oneness of the inner doctrine of all religions, a powerful and charismatic leader of men, masterful one moment, yet humility itself the next, defeated yet defiant, supremely victorious yet self-effacing, and ever mindful of his duties as a servant of God, working amongst men

It is well-known that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was a devout Muslim, but it is not as well-known that his faith was no blind belief, far from it, it was the result as much of upbringing as of deep contemplation and comprehension of Islamic doctrine, philosophy, ethical and moral code, the discipline and procedural detail, and the effect of all these on the individual and on human society

He was keenly cognizant of the personality and life of the Holy Prophet, conditions prevailing then in the Arabian peninsula and in Syria and the transformation following the establishment and widening public acceptance of Islam as radiating from the *Qur'aan Sharief* and the *Hadith* traditions

The Sixth Century AD was witness to depravity and anarchy of an extreme degree in Arabia and Syria Violence and brutality, vengefulness, persecution, blood feuds, human sacrifices, even cannibalism, were rampant and commonplace The classic Hobbesian life "nasty, brutish and short", characterised the region This horrendous human condition underwent a profound change with the emergence of Islam and greater and greater adherence by the people to the tenets and way of life prescribed by the *Qur'aan* From Islamic thought, the masses absorbed the message of peaceful submission to the divine will, and of the importance of knowledge and learning in the quest for truth, of brotherhood and service as essential to attaining

spirituality, and of cohesive social action and resolution vis-a-vis any moral way of life An amalgamation of these, among other elements of Islamic thought and belief, vitalized society and led to a remarkable process of attaining excellence

The thirst for learning impelled the pursuit of scientific truth and then tremendous progress in the sphere of building educational institutions The universities at Cairo, Baghdad and Cordova became centres of intellectual ferment in the very forefront of human endeavour Literature on science, technology, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, botany and physiology was acquired from India and from Europe, patiently studied, translated and applied In this period the classical works — the *Surya Siddhant*, the *Satapatha Brahman* and other invaluable treatises from India, became subject matter for intense intellectual scrutiny in institutions dealing with higher education Mathematics, to illustrate, drew upon Indian and Greek insights, and involved equations of the second degree, quadratic equations, the binomial theorem, calculus and trigonometry, spherical trigonometry, applied astronomy—all being part of an alert, practical and determined approach towards education organized in the period Advances were made in terms of establishing new architectural concepts, scientific agriculture, excellence in industrial manufacture, and the fine arts Simultaneously, a searching endeavour was on in the realm of philosophy, mysticism, esoteric religion and epistemology as examined through the lens of Islam This led to an accumulation of finely composed philosophical conjecture, analysis and perception similar to attainment in the Vedantic period of India

In the four centuries that followed the establishment of Islam, the might of Arabia expanded with tremendous force, impacting political, social and economic structures, from Spain across all of West Asia, through Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, the Central Asian region, China and India In a brief compass of a few centuries, Islam had worked

a miracle metamorphosing a quagmire, of backwardness and suffering, into a zone of powerful civilizational influence

These historical truths deeply moved Badshah Khan as his dream of a better future for the Pakhtuns — his own people, whom he loved so dearly, steeped as they were in poverty, primitiveness, illiteracy, feuding endlessly, violent in revengefulness, politically subjugated, mercilessly exploited — a life of freedom, prosperity and advancement seemed hopelessly impossible

His own upbringing, in terms of familial tradition and his personal insights into Islam made him realize that although the Pakhtuns were Muslims, the true content of Islam had not reached them The religion, philosophy and social and moral code bestowed by the Holy Prophet had, over fourteen centuries, largely been overlaid by moribund, narrow thinking that obscured the true religion Badshah Khan recalled "I was only five years old when I was sent to the mosque to be instructed by the *mullah* The poor *mullah*, however, was devoid of learning and practically illiterate He knew some *surahs* of the Holy Koran by heart. He was even able to read the Holy Koran But I very much doubt whether he understood one word of it! , the *mullahs* insisted that all this wordly learning was *kufr*—against religion! They reminded their pupils and other illiterate folk of the verse

Sabaq de madrase wai para de paise wai
Jannat ke bai zai navi dozakh ke bai ghase wahi
Those who learn in schools,
They are none but money's tools,
In Heaven they will never dwell,
They will surely go to hell "

Indeed, Badshah Khan believed that by the time Islam had permeated the region inhabited by the Pakhtuns, "the Arabs had lost much of their spiritual light, the divine fire and the piety which the Prophet of Islam had poured into their hearts and which great men like Abu Bakar and Omar had propagated Instead, there was intoxication with the

idea of extending their empire, and blindness from the desire to conquer countries" Referring to the prevalence, in the early period, of prosperity, creativity and peace when Buddhism was the accepted religion, he bemoaned the demolition, in Afghanistan and in the Frontier region, of that ancient spiritual, intellectual and cultural heritage, and he said "We did not receive in its place the true spirit of Islam"

Truth, love and service were central to Badshah Khan's conception of true religion He would quote a verse in the *Qur'aan*

> *"Man is in a state of loss, save those who believe and do good works, and exhort one another to Truth* [*italics mine*], and exhort one another to endurance "

He said "Those who are indifferent to the welfare of their fellowmen, whose hearts are empty of love, who have hatred and resentment in their hearts, they do not know the meaning of Religion " He understood Islam as the very embodiment of this message From early childhood he had studied the *Qur'aan Sharief*, even committing it completely to memory He would cite verse after verse to substantiate this view, emphatically stating that the total message of the Holy *Qur'aan* is to light the path of righteousness, purity, brotherhood and fellow-feeling, and performance of deeds of goodwill *"Sabse badi ibadat hamaare bandon ki khidmat hai"*—he used to say repeatedly "Service of our fellow-men is the greatest prayer " He would explain the significance of Surah I in the *Qur'aan Sharief*, the *Al-Fatihah or Fatihatu'l-Kitab*, as compelling such an approach towards the "straight path, the path of those whom the Almighty has favoured "

His exposition in this respect would coincide beautifully with the brilliant interpretation by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in his *The Tarjuman al-Qur'an*

It may be useful to recall the following verses of the *Qur'aan Sharief* which appear directly related to Badshah Khan's understanding of the message of Islam, of non-violence in thought and deed, and the tasks he set for

himself (Several of these *ayats* were referred to by him He did not mention the chapter or verse numeral, but these could be located without difficulty The English rendering of these verses is from the translation done by Marmaduke Pickthall)

Verse 25 in Chapter II is

'"And give glad tidings (O Muhammad) unto those who believe and do good works, that theirs are the Gardens *There for them are pure companions, there for ever they abide "*

The message reiterated in Verse 82 in the same Chapter

"Those who believe and do good works such are rightful owners of the Garden They will abide therein "

And Verse 83 indicates

" be good to parents and to kindred and to orphans and the needy, and speak kindly to mankind, and establish worship and pay the poor-due "

Verse 92 in Chapter III is

"Ye will not attain unto piety until ye spend of that which ye love And whatsoever ye spend, Allah is aware thereof "

And Verse 134 in Chapter III is

"Those who spend in ease and in adversity, those who control their wrath and are forgiving toward mankind, Allah loveth the good "

Verse 199 in Chapter VII is

'Keep to forgiveness (O Muhammad), and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant "

Verse 45 in Chapter II is

"Seek help in patience and prayer, and truly it is hard save for the humble-minded "

Verse 109 in Chapter II contains the injunction

"Forgive and be indulgent (toward them) until Allah give command "

And in Verse 263 of the same Chapter

"A kind word with forgiveness is better than alms-giving followed by injury Allah is Absolute, Clement."

Verse 277 of the same Chapter -

" Lo! those who believe and do good works, and establish worship and pay the poor-due, their reward is with their Lord and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve "

Verse 57 in Chapter III is

"And as for those who believe and do good works, He will pay them their wages in full " and

Verse 104 of the same Chapter

"And there may spring from you a nation who invite to goodness, and enjoin right conduct "

Verse 93 in Chapter V is

"There shall be no sin (imputed) unto those who believe and do good works So be mindful of your duty (to Allah), and do good works, and again be mindful of your duty, and believe, and once again be mindful of your duty, and do right Allah loveth the good "

In Chapter X Verse 27 is

"For those who do good is the best (reward) and more (thereto) Neither dust nor ignominy cometh near their faces Such are rightful owners of the Garden "

In Chapter XI Verse 11 is

"Save those who persevere and do good works Theirs will be forgiveness and a great reward "

And Verse 23 of the same Chapter

"Lo! those who believe and do good works and humble themselves before their Lord such are rightful owners of the Garden, they will abide therein "

Verse 110 in Chapter II is

"Establish worship, and pay the poor-due, and whatever of good ye send before (you) for your souls,

ye will find it with Allah Lo! Allah is Seer of what ye do."

These powerful directions, towards the ideal human attitude and action, illuminating the importance of service and goodwill, brotherhood, compassion, forgiveness, patience and prayer have implicit in them, a direction towards non-violence An attitude or action involving violence of thought or deed is incompatible with and indeed abhorrent to the prescribed path

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his autobiography had referred to Badshah Khan's spirit of non-violence as follows

> It was surprising how this Pathan accepted the idea of non-violence, far more so in theory than many of us And it was because he believed in it that he managed to impress his people with the importance of remaining peaceful in spite of provocation It would be absurd to say that people of the Frontier Province have given up all thoughts of ever indulging in violence, just as it would be absurd to say this of the people generally in any province The masses are moved by waves of emotion, and no one can predict what they might do when so moved But the self-discipline that the frontier people showed in 1930 and subsequent years has been something amazing

Alluding to this Badshah Khan was wont to say "Adam Tashadud" (non-violence) was enjoined by the *Qur'aan Sharief* itself, and as a true Muslim he understood, and wanted others to understand, the importance of non-violence Explicit statements in this regard occur repeatedly in the *Qur'aan Sharief* Verses 85 and 86 in Chapter II read

> 85· "Yet ye it is who slay each other and drive out a party of your people from their homes, supporting one another against them by sin and transgression—and if they came to you as captives ye would ransom them, whereas their expulsion was itself unlawful for you—Believe ye in part of the Scripture and disbelieve

ye in part thereof? And what is the reward of those who do so save ignominy in the life of the world, and on the Day of Resurrection they will be consigned to the most grievous doom for Allah is not unaware of what ye do "

86 "Such are those who buy the life of the world at the price of the Hereafter Their punishment will not be lightened neither will they have support "

Verse 264 is

"O ye who believe! Render not vain your almsgiving by reproach and injury "

Verse 21 in Chapter III is

"Lo! those who disbelieve the revelations of Allah, and slay the Prophets wrongfully, and slay those of mankind who enjoin equity promise them a painful doom "

A marvellous direction towards non-violence is in Verses 27 and 28 of Chapter V

27 "But recite unto them with truth the tale of the two sons of Adam, how they offered each a sacrifice, and it was accepted from the one of them and it was not accepted from the other (The one) said I will surely kill thee (The other) answered. Allah accepteth only from those who ward off (evil) "

28 "Even if thou stretch out thy hand against me to kill me, I shall not stretch out my hand against thee to kill thee, lo! I fear Allah, the Lord of the Worlds "

And Verse 32 is:

"For that cause We decreed for the Children of Israel that whosoever killeth a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind, and whoso saveth the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind "

The light of non-violence also shines forth from several verses in the *Qur'aan Sharief* which refer to the oneness of mankind, of all humanity being one's kith and kin, stemming from the same source moving to one destiny, the absence of force and compulsion in religion and the indication that the Almighty had sent many messengers earlier to various communities and nations at different periods of time and in different regions of the earth An attitude of non-violence in thought and belief, as distinguished from deed, is also thus clearly prescribed

Verse 213 in Chapter II reads

"Mankind were one community, and Allah sent (unto them) Prophets as bearers of good tidings and as warners, and revealed therewith the Scripture with the truth "

Verse 13 in Chapter XLIX reads

"O mankind! Lo! we have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct Lo! Allah is Knower, Aware "

Verse 256 in Chapter II directs

"There is no compulsion in religion The right direction is henceforth distinct Allah is Hearer, Knower "

Verse 136 in Chapter II reads

"Say (O Muslims) We believe in Allah and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Issac, and Jacob, and the tribes and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the Prophets received from their Lord We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have surrendered "

Verse 144 in Chapter III reads

"Muhammad is but a messenger, messengers (the like of whom) have passed away before him Will it be

> that, when he dieth or is slain, ye will turn back on your heels?"

> Verse 38 in Chapter XIII is

> "And verily We sent messengers (to mankind) before thee, and it was not (given) to any messenger that he should bring a portent save by Allah's leave For everything there is a time prescribed "

> Verse 150 in Chapter IV is

> "Lo! those who disbelieve in Allah and His messengers, and seek to make distinction between Allah and His messengers, and say We believe in some and disbelieve in others, and seek to choose a way in between."

> Verse 78 in Chapter XL is

> "Verily We sent messengers whom we have already mentioned to thee and some messengers whom we have not mentioned to thee "

And for anyone with a trace of doubt in his mind, there is the question in Verse 16 in Chapter XLIX

> "Say (unto them, O Muhammad) Would ye teach Allah your religion, when Allah knoweth all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and Allah is Aware of all things?"

As mentioned by Pyarelal in his book *Thrown to the Wolves*, Badshah Khan would say "There is nothing surprising in a Mussulman or a Pathan like me subscribing to the creed of non-violence " He is quoted by Pyarelal as saying

> It [non-violence] is not a new creed It was followed 1,400 years ago by the Prophet all the time he was in Mecca, and it has since been followed by all those who wanted to throw off an oppressor's yoke

It was nevertheless a tremendous achievement and act of service by Badshah Khan to have transformed thousands and thousands of Pakhtuns who had grown up in an old tradition of blood-feuding and taking of revenge, to commit

themselves to non-violence That was an extraordinary success of singular significance Among other things, it established the power of the true spirit of religion when transmitted by one who had understood and lived the essence of religion himself

In Badshah Khan's autobiography, as narrated to K B Narang, *My Life and Struggle,* there is a reference to a conversation between Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Mahatma Gandhi in regard to the commitment of Pakhtuns to non-violence Badshah Khan is quoted as having said

> I went to Bombay Gandhiji was staying with the Birlas and they invited me too When we were chatting one day, the subject of non-violence came up, and I said to Gandhiji
>
> Gandhiji, you have been preaching non-violence in India for a long time now, but I started teaching the Pathans non-violence only a short time ago Yet, in comparison, the Pathans seem to have learned this lesson and grasped the idea of non-violence much quicker and much better than the Indians Just think how much violence there was in India during the war, in 1942. Yet in the North-West Frontier Province, in spite of all the cruelty and the oppression the British inflicted upon them, not one Pathan resorted to violence, though they, too, possess the instruments of violence How do you explain that?
>
> Gandhiji replied Non-violence is not for cowards It is for the brave, the courageous And the Pathans are more brave and courageous That is the reason why the Pathans were able to remain non-violent

Badshah Khan's was a life-long struggle to bring to the Pakhtuns the light of true religion and to enable them to achieve a state of emancipation. He strove to reason with British authorities to persuade them to encourage socio-economic growth in Pakhtun society under an infrastructure for education and village development He said in a

conversation with Sir Ralph Griffith, the then Chief Commissioner of the Frontier Province

> If you spend half the amount of money you are now wasting on ruining and killing the tribal people, on setting up cottage industries for them, they would be able to earn an honest and independent living, and they would get acquainted with arts and crafts, industries and trade And if you build hospitals, for them, they would be able to get proper treatment for their illness All this would help to make these gentle, brave Pathans into useful members of the Pakhtun society, and the whole country would benefit

However, this approach of persuasion and pleading for the good of the people having not achieved the desired result, Badshah Khan pressed on, on his own, despite the disapproval of the authorities, in doing what he felt was right and necessary, not only as a matter of personal duty towards the people, but as action taken in the service of the Almighty, in a spirit of humility and devotion, perfectly attuned to the attitudes prescribed by the *Qur'aan Sharief*

It is noteworthy that the broad pluralism of outlook, attachment to values of truth, service, brotherhood and non-violence and the totality of commitment towards achieving the well-being of the people, mindful of the oneness of all human beings as creatures of the Almighty, coincided exactly with the Gandhian approach It was natural therefore that Badshah Khan associated himself fully with the activities of the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, rather than with the Muslim League whom he had first approached for assistance following repressive action by British authorities against him and his band of Khudai Khidmatgars As a devout Muslim he had recognized in due course that the leadership of the Muslim League consisted of people who had put up but a pretence of being Muslims and whose real function was as factotums of the ruling authority intent upon inciting communal hatred

with a view to perpetuating British domination of the sub-continent He had been approached repeatedly by interested parties trying to wean him away from his commitment to collaboration with the Congress It was put to him that as a true Muslim he could hardly associate himself with those who were non-Muslims particularly when a political party existed which stood exclusively for the interests of the Muslims Such people had however not reckoned with Badshah Khan's perception of true religion He used to say

"Maine secularism Bapu se nahin seekha Secularism Koran se paya "

(I did not learn secularism from Bapu I found it in the *Qur'aan Sharief*)

It was this conception of the true religion that was a factor in Badshah Khan's opposition to the partition of the sub-continent and to inclusion of the North-West Frontier Province in Pakistan He was mindful always of the terror, repression, injustice and exploitation that would follow in the life of the Pakhtuns the moment their land became part of a so-called Islamic State of Pakistan

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had perhaps the clearest vision among all their contemporaries of the total impact of British policy on the Muslims in the sub-continent, as also in terms of fracturing the potential strength of the people of undivided India

It is significant that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who underwent imprisonment for about fifteen years during the period of British rule, had to suffer repeated spells of imprisonment in the new state of Pakistan for a period aggregating to over sixteen years — almost every internment resulting in damage of his health He used to say, "I always get ill when I am in prison " The Pakistan Government had also made him pay heavy fines and had confiscated his private estate He said, "I cannot understand why and for what crime the Islamic Pakistani Government kept me and thousands of Khudai Khidmatgars in prison for so many

years " Tracing the origin of Pakistan he said "Pakistan was born not [out] of love but [out] of hatred and she grew up on hatred, on malice, on spite and hostility

Pakistan was created by the grace of the British in order that the Hindus and the Muslims might forever be at war and forget that they were brothers "

Through the sixteen years of prison in Pakistani jails and in the remaining period in his life up to January 1988, Badshah Khan's whole purpose in life was somehow to find a better existence for the people in the Frontier region Time and again he appealed to the Pakistani Government and to international public opinion He persevered in his *non-violent* resistance against the tyranny and injustice inflicted in Pakistan against the Pakhtuns whose cause he represented, and for whom he was striving to provide the elementary needs of human existence His son Khan Abdul Wali Khan, today represents the cause of the Pakhtuns and the example set by his great father

Here was a man of supreme spirit who felt deeply for the masses, considered it his personal duty to render life-long service towards achieving their emancipation, suffered terribly in this task, but remained indomitable till the end, a proud, dignified, unconquered spirit, true to his religion, true to his mission in life His life and work revealed the light of Islam and showed the right path for generations to follow for a better world

5

A Unique Leader of a Unique Movement: Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Pakhtun National Struggle

Baren Ray

Among Indians today the name of Abdul Ghaffar Khan would arouse indeed mixed emotions Those of the older generation may remember his very high status among the top Congress leaders, on the one hand, and that he had brought about the miracle of transforming the violent Pathans into being firm adherents of non-violence, on the other The younger lot may only know of his very long incarceration and suffering in Pakistan, of his long years in exile and that even at the end of his long life there was no clear reconciliation between this hallowed figure and the rulers of his country Only the rather well-informed and those with sharp political memory may remember that there was a sudden schism between the Khudai Khidmatgar movement and the Indian National Congress which had erupted during the penultimate eight or nine weeks before the transfer of power and partition with extremely grave and tragic consequences It was this which was dramatically expressed in the phrase 'thrown to the wolves' that Badshah Khan had used referring to the abandonment of his movement by the Indian leadership But in order to fully understand the political developments that led up to that

schism one has to properly appreciate the nature of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement and the character of its very charismatic leader

Abdul Ghaffar Khan was pre-eminently the most heroic of the leaders thrown up by India's many-decade-long struggle for independence But quite like many an other among the most eminent, he, too, fulfilled a broad spectrum of roles which by no means were confined only to be striving for emancipation from foreign occupation Let us very briefly recapitulate the various different roles that he carried out in the earlier decades of his political career that together created the composite movement, the 'Khuda-i-Khidmatgaraan', with its unique sweep, deep grass-rooted strength and very tenacious sustaining power Yet this very special contingent of the Indian national movement while it became an object of inspiration for all anti-imperialist patriots far and wide, it operated within a very narrow field and its appeal was totally ethno-centric addressed to his long suffering but very heroic Pakhtun people only While co-operating with all elements on the all-India plane, within the NWFP it often almost erred on the side of even neglecting the non-Pakhtun population, the most glaring example being that of the Hindaki or Multani speaking (mostly Muslim) population of Hazara and Dera Ismail Khan districts

His first sustained public activity was in the area of people's education (traced as early as 1910 or 1911 when he was 20 or 21 shortly to be undertaken jointly with his mentor the Haji Saheb of Turangzai) which encompassed several items

1 Overcoming traditional ignorance and inertia and combating many deeply entrenched superstitions,
2 Paramount emphasis on the teaching of and education through the Pashto language in a situation where the colonial power while recognizing the local language almost everywhere else in India, did not give any

recognition to Pashto even in the minuscule education programme it had for the North-West Frontier areas

3 Revival of and inculcating pride in Pakhtun culture, tradition and heritage This last point necessarily led to a fully-revived awareness of the commonness and the oneness of the Pakhtun people then divided in the three different zones — the Settled Districts, the un-administered mountain region, and Afghanistan.

Over nearly four decades between the second and the third Afghan wars (1881 to 1919) the Pakhtun people had largely acted as one in their confrontation against the British colonial power notwithstanding the three-tier division imposed upon them by that power Even after the anti-imperialist moderniser King Amanullah had been dethroned by a British-organized rising led by Bacha-i-Saquao (a non-Pakhtun), it was Pakhtun intervention from the tribal area that had restored power to the Afghan royal family All Pakhtuns whether in the tribal areas or in the Settled Districts always received moral and spiritual sustenance from the fact that a part of the common ethnos enjoyed some degree of liberty and statehood (in Afghanistan) even while they themselves were held under the thraldom of a colonial power That is why following on the heels of the Azad schools movement there came about the formation of the Anjuman-i-Islah-ul-Afaghinia, later termed the Afghan Jirga, and throughout the subsequent decades of the Khudai Khidmatgaraan Movement (KKM) the terms Pakhtun and Afghan continued to be used synonymously and one for the other The KKM's official journal *Pakhtun* even used the royal Afghan emblem on its mast-head for many years *

How then shall we describe the parameters of the Pakhtun national movement? At the macro level, in the all-India or even a larger anti-colonial context, they genuinely and totally supported the struggle for full independence of India, of the Muslim world, and of the whole colonized world

* See Appendix A

as such They had no difficulty or hesitation whatsoever about the prospect of British rule being replaced by complete independence of India in which the Pakhtun land would enjoy the fullest measure of autonomy and maximum self-rule The two concepts fitted each other quite perfectly At the micro level the movement ordained its people to serve fellow human beings specially the weak and the dispossessed Among a deeply religious people, the message was to serve all God's creatures The Khudai Khidmatgars' pledge began by saying that as God did not require any service, the service should be rendered to all God's creatures

The peculiar features of the social structure of Pakhtun society have been talked about often enough, the most salient being that they had never been organized in a state of their own The resultant elemental freedom and equality of a tribal society, with unrestrained individualism, combined with a militant fighting ability against the background of a martial tradition and placed in the very difficult mountainous terrain, made them into a very hard nut to crack (There were two frequent themes in many a British writing, first, the description of the Frontier as a thorny bush or a prickly hedge, and secondly, that while the Raj might extend some democratic rights to its subjects elsewhere, it could not afford to do so to the people in the Frontier who were the 'gate keepers' to the Empire!) No larger empire whether extending from the West, that is Iran or Central Asia, or as more often, from the East, that is India, whether the Mughals or the Sikhs or the British, none was ever able to fully subdue them or absorb them

What were the circumstances in which the KKM merged itself with the Indian National Congress and became its affiliate for the NWFP? There were three specific developments which constituted the background against which the merger process was accomplished

1 It was about ten years since the Congress had adopted and been reorganized on the basis of the

new Gandhi Constitution in 1920 at Nagpur which structured the Provincial Congress Committees on the basis of language In the NWFP, however, this meant not only that the leadership passed from the previous largely non-Pakhtun members to an overwhelmingly Pakhtun circle, but its social and even class character changed very radically From an almost entirely urban, it changed to a principally rural movement and even the urban delegates now represented the working people rather than the professional middle classes as hitherto The formal merger in 1929 brought together three distinct elements

(i) Ghaffar Khan's followers based in the country-side — the Afghan Jirga,
(ii) the remnants of the old Khilafat Committee, not very active by then, and
(iii) the mostly Peshawar-based Provincial Congress Committee

As the Jirga appeared in Peshawar, they undertook to organize the Pakhtun working people, and soon emerged the Tonga and Thela Union with a very high membership In sheer numbers the Jirga swept the other elements including most of the old guards

2 The all-India Congress had by then overcome the strong resistance from Hindu circles who had been opposing for many years the formation of a separate Sind province (as it would emerge as a Muslim majority province) and even the introduction of a quasi-representative system in the NWFP (as that too would transfer the loaves of office, albeit at the lower levels, from largely non-Muslim and almost entirely non-Pakhtun hands to Muslim-Pakhtun ones) It may be remembered that the Congress accepted both points as parts of the famous (Motilal) Nehru Report as among the points of agreement with Jinnah and as concessions to the Muslims

3 At the time of the merger, the Congress was in a

> state of flux being in the midst of an unprecedented all-India-wide mass movement (Dandi March, Civil disobedience movement, etc), declaration of complete independence as the national objective (1929 — Lahore Congress), and the introduction of new radical ideas about the rights of the common people (1931 — Karachi Congress), etc At this point the Congress distinctly manifested signs of turning into a multi-class multi-ethnic umbrella organization extending over the whole of the British Indian Empire with the promise of building a representative federative democratic republic to replace the Raj From the terms and conditions on which they were incorporated into the Congress and the high degree of autonomy that they were granted to run all their affairs (far in excess of those in practice in other provinces), the Khudai Khidmatgars took it that their objective of Pakhtun self-rule in the Pakhtun homeland was in perfect harmony with the Indian independence to replace the Raj That remained their objective ever since

The Khudai Khidmatgaraan, now formally the PCC, then went home to mobilize The movement's journal *Pakhtun* marked the first printed literature in the Pastho language It was not merely a party bulletin but a full-fledged cultural journal that represented nothing less than a Pakhtun cultural renaissance The journal heralded the appearance of a number of talented writers, poets and also playwrights Then the movement went to the countryside with these plays that totally electrified the Pakhtun masses (This was almost two decades before the emergence of the Indian People's Theatre Association and many decades before the use of such methods by the PAIGC, the national liberation movement of Guinea-Bissau in Portuguese West Africa, for instance) From the end of the Lahore Congress to the peak of the mass upsurge following the Kissa Khani Bazar episode is not a long period — less than eight months These plays and the village rallies in which they were staged (against

the background of the Azad schools movement which had been running for some years) constituted nothing less than what would be termed a cultural revolution. Their net impact is to be gauged from the records of the C.I.D. and from the subsequent developments that followed the Kissa Khani Bazar incident in April *

Abdul Ghaffar Khan and some other leaders had been arrested on 23 April 1930 after a rally at Utmanzai as constituting a threat to law and order and the Kissa Khani Bazar incident broke out in Peshawar the following day But what was most remarkable was the way in which the movement continued with its self-sustaining momentum which brought down the entire governmental machinery to a complete halt Simultaneously there were risings in the unadministered areas threatening to make inroads into the settled districts The rising was contained only with the massive use of the army and more particularly of the air force The actual withdrawal of the movement took place only after the news of the Gandhi-Irwin pact had reached Badshah Khan in prison and he sent out a message to his colleagues to stop the agitation on honourable terms The record of this almost year-long struggle was both unprecedented on an all-India plane and constituted a kind of total war with the majority of the population participating in all the Pakhtun areas The close dove-tailing between the non-violent mass agitation in the settled districts and the armed rising of the *lashkars* in the tribal areas was the most remarkable new feature The NWFP administration's obduracy to deny any representative system in the Frontier at all, was broken down at last as a result, although it is true that the Simon Commission had already recommended the cautious introduction of some electoral principle into the system a while earlier

Following this seven to eight month long upsurge in 1930, there came the second wave of the civil disobedience

* See also Appendix A and Appendix B

movement during 1931-34 This second movement though totally non-violent (while Abdul Ghaffar Khan was in prison and later during his externment from the NWFP when he was mostly at Wardha with Gandhiji) demonstrated the unique organization and discipline of the movement An average of 100,000 participants/volunteers took an active part as the nucleus of the various mass mobilizations In the subsequent period these very activists formed the core of the more Gandhian constructive programme (from the mid-1930s onwards) with a stress on socio-economic issues

We may at this stage attempt some general remarks about the nature of the movement Let me begin with an example In the context of the history of India's national strivings, the revolt of 1857 is often referred to as India's first struggle for independence This is true only in a very general or in a rhetorical sense The classes which participated in the events of 1857 and the objectives for which they fought were very different from those of the new movement which began under the banner of the Indian National Congress from 1885 There was a wide gap and discontinuity But in the case of the Pakhtun movement, this gap was indeed physically bridged and there was an actual continuity In the North-West Frontier area, the elements and social classes which had opposed the British power during the Anglo-Afghan wars, against the British conquest of the area in 1849, and in the many continuing periodic armed uprisings in the subsequent decades, were not basically different from the Pakhtun Khudai Khidmatgaraan of the 1930s Without being an armed liberation struggle (specially in the settled districts), the 1930 uprising had something analogous to the liberation struggles in the Rif in Spanish Morocco or in Libya following the occupation by Mussolini or in Vietnam in the 1930s and 1940s against the French colonial power and later the Japanese occupation It is the character of total rising in total opposition which is the feature in common in these very different struggles

achievements to its credit The first was the near total mobilization of the people of a traditional society about which we have just spoken The second was the evolution of the formula, of the programme through which the members of a traditional society would be transformed, indeed modernized, through education, awareness of the uniqueness of their culture and legacy, and an open-minded humanism (mostly drawn from humanitarian traditions within Islam) that will help them advance beyond their tribal limitations in thought and action and will be quite adequate for our times It will not be inaccurate to say that it was the KKM which marked the Pakhtun people's transition from a tribal situation to that of a self-conscious nationality

But the beginning was not entirely by himself Abdul Ghaffar Khan did start his first school at Utmanzai in 1910 or 1911, but the Haji Saheb of Turangzai was already interpreting Islam in a more humane way with a stress on service Within a year the Haji invited the young dynamic Abdul Ghaffar to Mardan for long discussions where their ideas were honed in common and a second school was opened The Haji Abdul Wahid Saheb of Turangzai had been working for several years in the villages of Mardan, near Utmanzai, giving religious instruction He was the Frontier's first social reformer The Pathans throughout the district knew him as Haji Saheb and regarded him as a saint He had attracted a dedicated band of young volunteers, and when he heard that a young Muhammadzai had started a school in Utmanzai, he was naturally interested He guessed that he would find a kindred spirit and invited Abdul Ghaffar to Mardan

When they met, Haji Saheb asked Abdul Ghaffar to start a school for older boys at Gaddar, in the north Abdul Ghaffar accepted the suggestion at once He liked the village, and he liked the contact with the Haji's circle of young liberals Under their influence he began to read more widely He subscribed to progressive Muslim periodicals like

Zamindar and *Al-Hilal* that were just beginning to appear A Muslim renaissance at the all-India plane was in the making, and its fresh, vigorous breezes were just beginning to stir the Indian Muslims Under the Frontier Crimes Act, readers of *Al-Hilal* were of course blacklisted Public meetings were banned except in mosques, so Abdul Ghaffar and Haji Saheb's co-workers were forced to move about in the province secretly

Abdul Ghaffar Khan later described the Haji Saheb as essentially a social reformer, whose struggle was to found Islamic schools where 'outdated and useless traditions' could be replaced with newer ideas still consonant with Islam This was scarcely the contemporary British view, to them he was simply an outlaw He (Haji Saheb) unified the Mohmands and roused them against the British on several occasions hence the British complaint that letting him escape (in 1913) was the first big mistake they made in the Frontier But the British could not take the risk of another full-scale war with the Mohmands to get him back from the tribal area In the British military accounts of the time, the Haji of Turangzai, like the Faqir of Ipi, figures only as a regrettably long-lived enemy

The Haji Saheb had decided to fight the British quite openly He had tried to rally the villagers of Berner to drive the foreigners from their hills But the Frontier War (1897) was still too fresh in the minds of the British, and the Haji Saheb found himself caught between the Mullahs who intrigued against him, and the alarmed British When his arrest appeared imminent, the Haji fled one night to the Frontier territories of the Mohmands He never returned

Politics in the Frontier, 1945-47

As for the very intense and dramatic developments of the post-World War II years leading up to the transfer of power and partition, we have to note some of the specific features of the background of the happenings in the Frontier From the rise of the KKM in the 1920s till the resignation

of the Congress ministry by the end of 1939, the period can be considered one phase during which while the Pakhtun national movement continued to make advances, the prestige of the British administration, more specially the awe in which it was held previously by the people, continued to fall The fact of Pakhtun society being divided along its factional lines has been much commented upon [2] While the senior Khans, allied to the colonial administration and recipients of their honours and largesse, had come down in the people's eyes, the junior Khans, whether motivated by their factionalism or their patriotism, constituted the nationalist bloc and, inspired by the KKM, took a remarkably radical pro-people position (in addition to their radical anti-imperialist position, that is,) which united the majority of the population in one very broadbased camp

As long as the ministry was in office, in spite of its many weaknesses, the British administrators were put under severe strain With the resignation of the ministry, they were back to their previous unchallenged position There was a parallel development among the people also Whereas the junior Khans, poor Pakhtuns and the non-Pakhtun immigrant common people, who in the Pakhtun-majority districts were largely culturally Pakhtunized, formed one bloc, the senior Khans with their hangers on and the non-Pakhtun Muslims of the province, specially in Hazara and Dera Ismail Khan districts, became natural allies constituting the potential field for the growth of the Muslim League Till then the Muslim League was extremely weak in the Frontier but after 1940, Governor Cunningham and the administration took an active lead in bringing these potential allies to come and act together even though from all reports the League still remained extremely poor organizationally That period saw a few KKM personalities defecting to the Muslim League, the most prominent among them being Khan Abdul Qaiyum Khan (Deputy Leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly) Later many Congress MLAs were detained (specially after August 1942) when a Muslim League

ministry was installed But the organizational position of the League continued to be very poor as was the performance of its ministry

But a much more sinister programme was launched clandestinely by Governor Cunningham which proved to be quite effective This was the infamous Mullah programme conducted through Khan Bahadur Kuli Khan, a former government officer, and a number of British officials The net effect of this Mullahs' propaganda campaign right through the war years was not inconsiderable However, owing to the rather negative record of the Muslim League ministry and more particularly its very poor organization, the elections in 1945-46 resulted in the KKM winning a clear majority of the Muslim seats although the Muslim League did make some considerable inroads as compared to its miserable record in 1937[3] However, the Mullah programme registered some long term gains in creating some new and effective centres or sources of influence and opinion-making in the NWFP Traditionally the sources of influence and opinion-making in Pakhtun society lay with the Khani elite, but in that there had come about a deadlock or a balance that was just too unacceptable to the imperial power Guided by the experts of the erstwhile I P S (the Indian Political Service), they came up with a programme, that planned properly and given the necessary training, a group of Pakhtun Pirs and Astanadars with some image of piety could be recruited and prepared who would be able to hold forth against the KKM stalwarts This proved to be somewhat effective specially against the background of the high degree of communalization that was taking place at the all-India plane Thus emerged from Cunningham's secret programme the Pir of Manki and the Pir of Zakoori who proved to be the most effective speakers in support of the Muslim League specially because both were from the Pakhtun heartland of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement

The League's battle cry now became that the results of the 1946 provincial elections were no longer representative

of the Muslim opinion in the Frontier and that fresh elections should be held to determine the future of the NWFP in Pakistan But the real organizers of a frantic campaign to break down law and order, communalize the atmosphere, organize attacks upon the life and property of the minorities, encourage raids from the tribal areas, all directed to bring down the KKM-Congress Ministry, were the I P S officials and a handful of clandestine operators like Khurshid Anwar (Naib Salar-e-Ala of the Muslim League National Guards), who were in-charge of the terrorist operations which included making bombs, arson and running a so-called 'Azad Pakistan Radio' The clamour was building up already in the last quarter of 1946, after the formation of the Interim Government at the Centre and specially during and after Nehru's visit to the tribal areas All this had gone on for several months when, after the Attlee declaration in London on 20 February 1947, almost on a signal, the disturbances were mounted up many folds with daily clashes, illegal processions against the Provincial Assembly, with hundreds of League agitators from other provinces (including students and *burqa* clad women) concentrating on Peshawar This was the period when the League was making a desperate attempt to physically capture both in the Punjab and the NWFP the centres of government with the full connivance of the British officials But there was a big difference

In the Punjab the Unionist Ministry had resigned and there was Section 93 (Governor's Rule) as the League did not have a majority to form a new ministry In the NWFP, the KKM Ministry had a clear majority and the express aim of the clashes was to compel the Government to take action against the street violence so that the ministry could then be accused of spilling Muslim blood The Ministry was truly between the hammer and the anvil If they did not take strong action, the ministry could be dismissed by the Governor for failure to maintain law and order and if they did, the KKM could be shown as anti-Muslim The Assembly was having its budget session and the ministry

was truly constrained and their hands tied However, soon after the budget had been passed thousands of uniformed Khudai Khidmatgars appeared in Peshawar and put a stop to the street violence and the League's provocations This was a very effective demonstration of the comparative strength of the two sides, but the League agitation continued nevertheless with full support of the officials making it increasingly impossible for the minorities to remain in the Frontier, specially in the outlying areas Another specific objective was to make it impossible for the non-Muslim MLAs to remain at their posts and carry out their political functions The League's overall strategy after Attlee's February declaration was that they should be able to take over the so-called Pakistan provinces physically, by force if necessary, and in this they were faced with the special difficulty that they were badly in a minority in the Provincial Assembly elected hardly a year ago in which the question of Pakistan had been the real substantive issue

To demonstrate the total breakdown of law and order, therefore, their specific objective was to prove that the Assembly was no longer representative and Section 93, followed by fresh elections, was called for The concerted action by the Dr Khan Sahib Ministry and the KKM acting outside were largely successful in preventing any overt breakdown of law and order and denying any excuse to Governor Olaf Caroe from taking the steps that he was pressing for But the Frontier was the prize that the British were not ready to lose under any circumstances The most explicit evidence of this commitment is to be seen in the 'Note by Field-Marshal Sir Claude Achinleck'[4] dated 11 May 1946 from his General Headquarters, Delhi, submitted for Britain's Chief of Defence The document written only a couple of months after the Provincial Assembly elections shows that the British military interests were determined that the NWFP would go to Pakistan in the event of partition, no matter what the results of the elections

The overall situation in India, however, was becoming

totally unbearable The consultations in London between Prime Minister Attlee and other Cabinet members concerned with India and the Viceroy, on the one side, and the Indian leaders, Nehru, Jinnah, Liaquat Ali and Baldev Singh, on the other, did not yield any result except the clarification, rather assertion, by the British Government that Clause 19 of 16 May 1946 Cabinet Mission declaration meant that the Provinces' joining in the designated Groups was obligatory rather than optional The Congress acceptance of the Cabinet Mission scheme till then was conditional to this difference of interpretation and the Congress had proposed to take the issue to the Federal Court The League had originally accepted the declaration in full (both the long-term as well as the short-term programmes) quite early on 6 June 1946, but after the Congress's conditional acceptance of 25 June, and Nehru's much commented about statement of 10 July 1946 (that the Congress members of the Constituent Assembly would not be bound by any understanding to follow the Cabinet Mission scheme), the League withdrew its acceptance of the long-term programme followed by its Direct Action decision of 29 July The League had also opposed the Congress suggestion of asking the Federal Court on Clause 19 But now that the British Cabinet asserted its interpretation which apparently went in League's favour and shortly afterwards the Congress Working Committee formally reiterated its acceptance of the Mission scheme together with this interpretation of Clause 19 (22 December 1946, followed by AICC resolution of 6 January 1947), the League Working Committee categorically rejected any compliance with the Mission scheme (Karachi, 31 January 1947)

Almost half a century after the event, even with all the archival material published and researched into, we still do not know for certain whether that decision of the League was Jinnah's own or was based on any kind of British advice The question is prompted by what we know about Jinnah having been guided by Woodrow Wyatt's advice

— that comes uppermost to mind — on more than one occasion and the fact that all the Quaid-i-Azam papers and those of Cripps or A V Alexander, for instance, have not been easily available to Indian scholars What we do know from the subsequent documents of 1947 is only as to how that basic decision of not accepting a loose confederal structure was implemented and the basis of the division, which side got what and all the modalities of the process We neither know if the Congress Working Committee resolution of 22 December 1946 accepting Clause 19 was with the desire and expectation of actually implementing the Cabinet Mission scheme or was just going through a certain motion in order to be more certain about an alternate choice About the Muslim League we still know far less

Going back to our story, given this near absolute irreconcilability of the Congress and the League positions, Britain, however, was in no position of drawing any advantage out of this situation in the sense of prolonging her presence and domination of India against the wishes of the two power centres in the country Therefore, the Labour Cabinet had to quickly take some basic new decisions which were to be seen in the altogether new tone in which they addressed the Indian leaders (and the Indian people at large) and the declaration of June 1948 as the outer limit of British presence in India In addition to all the developments in India, the latter had largely to do with the politico-economic developments in Britain itself All this was reflected in the 20 February 1947 declaration including the announcement about the new Viceroy of charm and grace Lord Mountbatten

Apparently we have much more information about the Mountbatten period About the specific question of the demand for an independent Pakhtunistan in the event of India and Pakistan failing to remain within a loose confederation *a la* Mission scheme, whatever theory or hypothesis we may now eventually hammer out, has to be reconciled with the fact that Mountbatten's original

scheme that Ismay carried to London for Cabinet approval at the end of April did contain the option of a Pakhtunistan choice * Of course the overall basis of that scheme (the so-called plan Balkan) was quite different from the one we are familiar with in the 3 June Mountbatten award But it did contain the Pakhtunistan choice albeit in a different context of modality We also know that the crucial change from the one basis to the other was brought about during 7 to 11 May while Nehru was with the Mountbattens at Simla An analysis of this development was presented by Y Krishan in a learned paper published in *History* (Journal of the British Historical Association) in 1983 very shortly after the relevant *Transfer of Power* volume covering the period and the event was published[5] Mountbatten's official biographer Ziegler found the paper damaging enough obliging him to seek to unblemish his hero by arguing against the Indian scholar But strangely enough in almost a decade since its publication no Indian scholar has found it necessary to refer to it The most balanced and objective account of the developments in Simla, however, has been given in two essays of R J Moore[6]

The concept of Pakhtun autonomy had found an easy niche when Indian independence was being conceived as a federative republic with the maximum autonomy for the constituent units The ideas as to what should constitute the constituent units, whether language or religion or any other aspect of ethnicity, were necessarily vague Those in the Indian National Congress who were not so theory minded but relied on *realpolitik* expected that these various federal ideas would help in working out some bargain with the Muslims to keep the country united But when no general compromise with the Muslims could be worked out, the pendulum swung back, away from the federative principle to that of unitary solidity Those days in May in Simla represented such a change in Nehru's mind That

* See Appendix D

the Nehru-Patel leadership had swung from the federative principle towards that of unitary solidity is to be seen also in their strong opposition to the formation of linguistic provinces after independence and the weakening of the federal principle in the Constitution After it became clear to his team that the Indian Union could not possibly be maintained on the basis of the Cabinet Mission scheme, Mountbatten's first draft for an alternative plan was on the basis of self-determination of the Provinces But after what the Indian National Congress had considered a traumatic experience — it extending concessions to the Muslims (or was it to Jinnah?) over decades and always being spurned and the Muslims insisting upon separating none the less — the Congress leaders were now determined to make the parts that remained with them to be as unitary and solid as they could possibly make them

Arguably they could have moved India in that direction *after* the transfer of power and allowed the concept that had held sway over Indian constitutional thinking since the beginning of the century, namely self-determination of the units, who then come together, to operate first Perhaps it can be said that after the trauma, the temptation of getting a readymade unitary state in one whole was too great, or to put it in another way, neither dominion wanted the powers of the Viceroy to be fragmented and both wanted it to be transferred in full In case of India, it was of course moderated by the presence of a collegiate team, popularly known as the Congress High Command and subsequently the emergence of a democratic written constitution, Jinnah, however, exercised the whole of the Viceroy's powers in accordance with the 1935 Government of India Act, as shown so well by Khalid B Sayeed

Once the objective of an immediate unitary state had been accepted by the Nehru-Patel leadership, there was no way they could help the Khudai Khidmatgars' demand — for autonomy and the struggle for Pakhtunistan Their criticisms as presented by Gandhi, Pyarelal and Tendulkar

is not a whit less today than when they were first uttered or written out The KKM's abandonment by the Indian National Congress was indeed true and tragic

However, if we recall the whole sequence of events some very significant and disturbing inferences begin to emerge The Congress Working Committee had conducted prolonged and very detailed discussions on the different aspects of the Cabinet Mission scheme specially on the question of the compulsory grouping of the provinces before the Congress gave its conditional acceptance on 25 June 1946 [8] But subsequently by early 1947 when the communal situation had become quite intolerable on the one hand, and the Muslim League had continued its boycott of the Constituent Assembly and was bent upon insisting for a separate sovereign Pakistan, on the other, the Congress countered with the demand for the partition of Bengal and Punjab and separating Muslim-majority Sylhet from the rest of Assam, as tit for tat, as it were But there was no comparable broad discussion in the Congress leadership on this occasion Even Gandhiji learnt of it only after the decision had been taken Abdul Ghaffar Khan was certainly not privy to any such discussion although the NWFP was a major party concerned

We must recall that after the Cabinet Mission statement of 16 May 1946, the Khan brothers and KKM "had made it known that they were not much concerned about the political aspect of Grouping They had no objection to joining any Group or Section which was prepared to guarantee to the Pathans full freedom to develop along their own lines "[9]

> "I have no objection to be in one group with the Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan, but I must say this that before entering into such a partnership all of us should sit like brothers and satisfy each other by removing certain doubts and assure one another that such grouping is in the interest of each Province Some

> people give it a religious colour but that is not correct What has religion got to do with it? This is an economic problem — a question purely of profit and loss Nothing can be done by force Even a father cannot compel his son these days "
>
> "Apart from this, there is the second important question that requires attention — that of joining the Hindu-majority Provinces, when we are surrounded on all sides by the Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan How can it be possible that we should ignore our own neighbour and over and above that neighbour's head join others? If we can ever form a Group, it can only be with the Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan and not with other Provinces, as all Hindu-majority Provinces are hundreds of miles away from us "[10]

This would show that the Khudai Khidmatgars' objection to the Grouping was not on the ground that it was obligatory but that it did not ensure their autonomy and was not based on mutual consultations between the Muslim League (who commanded a majority in Group B) and the KKM Yet in the long dialogue between the Congress leadership and the Labour Government from the end of June 1946 till the London meeting in the beginning of December, these KKM demands were never represented much less highlighted Instead the Congress leadership only insisted that the NWFP did not want to join the Group This certainly was a misrepresentation of the actual position

What were the Labour Government's thinking and motivation regarding the future of India? To trace a few points in time sequence While the War was drawing towards its close, Attlee, as the Dominions Secretary in the War Cabinet, had asked the India Office in January 1945 to investigate how Dominion Status for India could be reconciled with the continued presence of British forces on Indian soil (in contrast to the other Dominions from where the British army had marched out as soon as Dominion

Status had been given) When a few months later Labour formed the Government of its own on a massive electoral victory, by then it also learned of the domestic compulsions in Britain Favouring self-determination for India, the Labour Government, while it negotiated with Indians from a position of post-war weakness, nevertheless it was guided by its desire to protect British prestige and military and economic interests Attlee's desire to restructure Indo-British relations on a long-term basis was most detailed on defence Such continued use of Indian territory for strategic purposes could be possible in either of two circumstances First, if the transfer of power was to a Union in which Britain would continue to wield considerable leverage albeit in a neutral/arbiter capacity between the Congress and the Muslim League leaderships Or, secondly, if Pakistan held the strategically significant areas particularly in the north-west and invited Britain to operate from there

There was thus no essential difference, strategically speaking, between the Wavell Breakdown Plan and the Labour Cabinet's thinking There was a vital difference of course, but it lay elsewhere The real issue was Could Britain afford to withdraw from the Congress-majority provinces in a huff? This, the Attlee Cabinet could accept under no circumstances, in fact it was determined that the withdrawal from India should yield the maximum by way of engendering goodwill between India and Britain, on the one hand, and for enhancing Britain's prestige in the post-war world, on the other Mountbatten had already carried out such a mission in Burma, albeit on a much smaller scale, by the middle of 1946, clinching an agreement with General Aung San and his young colleagues in the AFPFL (Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League), quite visibly against the previous line of policy of Governor Doran-Smith He was, therefore, a very natural choice to be the supreme instrument for carrying out these objectives of the Attlee Government.

But how to ensure that the NWFP remained in Pakistan,

that remained a specific problem If we objectively look back on all the developments in the Frontier from the spring of 1946 to the July 1947 Referendum, there is nothing to indicate that there ever was the slightest possibility of the NWFP becoming a part of the Indian Union in the event of a total partition of India No spokesman of the KKM had ever alluded to any such possibility The KKM was primarily concerned about protecting the NWFP's autonomy from the possible overbearing encroachments of the Punjab What was required to be done was to work out a minimum modus vivendi between a twenty-five-year old, grassroots strong, mass based movement that very legitimately represented the Pakhtun people of the Frontier, on the one side, and the Muslim League which had made a big advance in winning over the loyalty of the Muslim population in the Punjab and Sind, as elsewhere in India, on the other This, however, was totally neglected if not altogether ruled out in the given atmosphere of almost total animosity between the Congress and the League leading on to a very acute Hindu-Muslim conflict Over this whole one-year period, the Congress made use of the Pakhtun's urge for autonomy and self-rule as a stick with which to beat the Muslim League's Pakistan schemes (themselves undefined, unclear and changing) but it neither helped the KKM to sort out their problems with their neighbours nor encouraged them to try any such moves on their own At the same time the Congress leadership went on giving the most solemn assurances to the KKM that it would not accept partition under any circumstances

British imperialism, however, had made its own inputs already (Cunningham's Mullah programme), which had created the basis for the claim that Muslim opinion in the Frontier had changed from that represented in the results of the Provincial Assembly elections held in March 1946 From the end of 1946 till the beginning of June 1947 the KKM was fighting, back to the wall, to defend its ministry from the Muslim League's Direct Action campaign under

the overhanging threat of Governor Olaf Caroe dissolving the Ministry under Section 93 It is against this background that the deal between Nehru and Mountbatten in early May in Simla ensured the continuity of the ministry and even the retirement of the Governor but the Pakhtun people were saddled with the referendum

If this deal (which purportedly saved the ministry) is to be considered as supposedly favouring the KKM, then certainly it was the most Pyrrhic victory if ever there was one If the Congress leadership were genuinely convinced that in the given circumstances obtaining in the spring of 1947, full-fledged partition of India (together with that of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam) was the only way out to ensure the transfer of power and avoiding a civil war situation, then it should have been obvious that the NWFP would in the circumstances go with Pakistan and the task to which the Congress leadership should have addressed itself (in regard to the NWFP) was to ensure the continuity of a democratic polity in Pakistan in which the autonomy of the Pakhtuns would be safeguarded and even more importantly the KKM would continue to enjoy its legitimacy Instead they co-operated in the devising of the terms of a referendum envisaging the NWFP to be a part of India across hundreds of miles of Pakistan territory, for which the KKM had never (since the Pakistan demand had been raised in 1940) given them any such mandate

The KKM had certainly most solemnly committed itself to a united India to replace the Raj but that in no way is tantamount to becoming a part of Hindustan in the event of the Congress accepting partition on the basis of a Hindu-Muslim division Even if it is argued that when Pakistan could have two wings across more than a thousand miles of Indian territory it should not be intrinsically impossible for the NWFP to be a part of the Indian Union, there are two powerful arguments to the contrary First, neither had the KKM ever considered such a possibility nor had it given such a mandate regarding its own future to the parent all-

India organization, namely, the Indian National Congress Secondly, the Congress leadership in the course of the crucial negotiations with Mountbatten during April-May 1947 never consulted the KKM regarding the latter's future and confronted Abdul Ghaffar Khan with a complete fait accompli only in the Working Committee meeting on 3 June Very naturally and expectedly, Ghaffar Khan rejected this line of action there itself and the entire KKM leadership body reiterated the same after detailed discussions at Bannu on 21 June That what they really needed was not a pitched battle at this ultimate stage to prevent the NWFP from going to Pakistan (which the Nehru-Patel leadership would have hurled them into with all its civil war consequences) but the working out of a modus vivendi with the Muslim League, is to be seen in the desperate attempt Abdul Ghaffar Khan continued to make with the lone assistance of Gandhiji in meeting Mountbatten and Jinnah in the remaining few days that he was to be in India* But evidently the time was already too late

The post-partition developments in the NWFP is another story and cannot possibly be squeezed into this one But a few remarks may none the less be pertinent as a tailpiece The KKM leadership was right in its understanding that in the wake of the general communalization at the all-India plane (and thanks to the Mullah programme which, of course, was unknown to them at the time) there had come about a temporary swing in Pakhtun opinion on the question of Pakistan It spite of all their ethnocentrism the Pakhtuns after all had never denied their Muslim identity The KKM, therefore, reckoned that with such powerful geopolitical factors arrayed against them and so determined to keep the NWFP in Pakistan and with a sizeable section of the population favouring it (even if much below fifty per cent), this would in the Pakhtun context lead to a vertical split in society leading even to bloody family feuds on a

* See Appendices C to K

large scale and a violent civil war situation lasting for decades

They, therefore, decided to by pass the Pakistan question, as it were (on which there was such a sharp difference of opinion), and sought instead to find the best way which would help to reunite the Pakhtun people on the basis of issues that were a live part of their political consciousness They, therefore, chose to emphasize the issues of autonomy and democracy After their demand for a Pakhtunistan choice was not conceded and rebuffed without as much as a fight in which they could have participated with all their political strength, they chose not to be seen as opposing something that some Pakhtuns were demanding in such a determined way Conversely their enemies wanted precisely that, not only the Muslim League but much more the British That the KKM which for decades had been seen as representing the popular aspiration should now be seen as engaged in opposing what a section of the popular masses were demanding, would be a most desirable bonus for them providing them with a golden opportunity to crush it

The KKM understood quite rightly that the swing was temporary, and that after the wind had blown over, the Pakthun masses would again rally in their support in pursuit of their long-term interests Their strategy was one of defending the political legitimacy of the KKM in Pakistan and to protect the prospects of their continued legal functioning

Jinnah, as the new Governor-General of Pakistan, promptly removed the KKM Ministry and a Muslim League Ministry was installed in its place following the referendum After a short period, however, when Abdul Ghaffar Khan was in Karachi for the session of the Constituent Assembly, Jinnah's conversations with the latter were quite cordial (as narrated by Badshah Khan) and he quite willingly agreed to meet the KKM cadre when he was to visit the NWFP shortly But at this stage there was a conspiracy against

the KKM in which the new British Governor Dundas and other key British officials as well as Khan Abdul Qaiyum, the new Chief Minister, were all involved The KKM was charged with conspiring to assassinate Jinnah and a ferocious attack against the KKM began soon afterwards These repressions which included detention and torture of tens of thousands of KKM members, including all leading members, continued till the mid-1950s But this was only one side of the picture In 1947 the anti-KKM swing was spearheaded by the Muslim League in which certain Pakhtun Mullahs (particularly the Pir of Manki and the Pir of Zakoori) were the heores of the Muslim League campaign Well before 1948 was over most of these Pakthun Mullahs who had constituted the swing in Pakhtun opinion had left the Muslim League By 1956 when Abdul Ghaffar Khan after his release was allowed to enter the Frontier for the first time, both the Pirs were in the van of those who were welcoming him The KKM's understanding of the nature of their society and the self-awareness of their people was always correct and it was on that basis that their battle-scarred hero again succeeded in taking new steps to further broadening their movement against the then prevailing military dictatorship in power in Pakistan

To conclude this narration of a long multi-dimensional career that was both heroic and saintly, let me quote from a Pakhtun scholar

"In almost all of his speeches for the independence of Pakhtunistan and India, he [Abdul Ghaffar Khan] equated foreign rule with the status of slavery Yet, despite his strong nationalism and anti-British sentiments, Ghaffar Khan at no time advocated the sort of nationalism from which stems the degenerate creed of authoritarian totalitarianism or the cult of national self-worship He offered a humanitarian nationalism i e , one designed to protect the dignity, privacy, and welfare of individuals against alien interference he referred to the inseparability of fundamental, universal human rights as integral to all true nationalism, and,

moreover, indicated that he [Abdul Ghaffar Khan] had gone considerably beyond the ordinary concept of nationality For Ghaffar Khan, each nationality was almost a manifestation of the divine, and therefore, something sacred which should not be subverted but cultivated Extrapolating from his expanded definition of nationalism, he believed that the creation of nations on such a basis would promote peace not only in the Indian sub-continent, but all over the globe"*

That underlines Abdul Ghaffar Khan's modernity and the continuing relevance of his praxis well beyond his centenary

* See Bibliography, Ahmad Sha Mohabbat

Appendix—A

[In 1924] the annual gathering of the Azad school was postponed in anticipation of Abdul Ghaffar's release [he was sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment in December 1921] When it took place, thousands of people were present, brimming with enthusiasm, admiration and love for the youthful leader In the gathering he made a short speech [the earliest to be traced in British records]

Once a pregnant tigress attacked a herd of sheep and gave birth to a cub and died The cub grew up among the sheep and adopted their ways and manners Once a tiger attacked them and discovered that there in the herd of sheep was a tiger cub bleating while running away with the sheep The tiger was amazed to hear a tiger cub bleating The tiger separated the cub from the herd and dragged it to a pool in which it could see its own reflection and realize that it was a tiger and not a sheep The tiger told the cub, 'You are a tiger and not a sheep, do not bleat but roar like a tiger!'

You Pathans are not sheep but tigers You have been reared in slavery Don't bleat, but roar like a tiger

D G Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan faith is a battle* (Bombay, 1967), p 46

[People's enthusiastic response to the speech annoyed the authorities and they took due note of this new leader risen among the Pakhtuns The speech is, of course, fully symptomatic of the ethnocentric nature of Pakhtun movement from the beginning From then onwards Abdul Ghaffar was given the title of *Fakhr-e-Afghan*, Pride of the Pathans]

[In their early years the Khudai Khidmatgars used to hold *mushairas* on such topics as 'Should the young people sacrifice themselves for the country?' or that under the original mast-head of their journal *Pakhtun* used to be the lines "Years of a slave in servitude are nothing as compared with a single hour of freedom spent in the agonies of death"]

Appendix—B

He'd [Abdul Ghaffar Khan] been known to the British since 1919 when he started widespread agitation in Peshawar against the Rowlatt Act Undoubtedly his influence was considerable, and Sir William Barton has given it as his view that, if the Afghan invasion had not been dealt with so decisively, Ghaffar Khan would have succeeded in raising the whole of the Peshawar district By now [1929] he was known as the 'Frontier Gandhi', his underground government in Peshawar district was almost as powerful as the British administration

See Arthur Swinson, *North-West Frontier People and Events*, 1839 - 1947 (London, 1967), pp 308 and 310

Appendix—C

[Speaking at Patna on the tragedy of the spreading Hindu-Muslim riots, Abdul Ghaffar Khan said]

They set fire from one end of the land to the other and smeared their hands with blood and loot The British bureaucracy gloated over the League vandalism They wanted to paint the Indians as beasts, thirsting for each other's blood, and incapable of behaving as decent human beings They wanted to convince the Labour Government that the Britishers should continue to rule over India, otherwise the Indians would meet their doom through fratricide Aided by their patrons, the Muslim Leaguers took advantage of the situation to spread anarchy in the land

Tendulkar, *op cit*, p 405

[While speaking about the spread of the riots and the killings in the Frontier, Abdul Ghaffar Khan said]

Caroe must feel ashamed that four hundred innocent citizens have been killed in the province and not a single

culprit is arrested What sort of administration it is

Ibid, p 420

[Later while passing through Lahore, he again appealed to the Muslim League to sit together in a common jirga to come to a peaceful settlement]

Appendix—D

[After the discussions in Simla between Nehru and Mountbatten in early May the plan was redrafted and the meeting of Indian leaders at which it was to be presented, postponed from May 17 to June 2, 1947 Tendulkar records]

One of the modifications introduced was that whereas under the first draft plan the provinces had the right generally to determine their future, that freedom was now taken away Originally, for instance, the Frontier Province could opt, if it chose, for independent existence both outside India and Pakistan The re-drafting sealed the fate of the Frontier Province outside the orbit of Pakistan, and that of a "Sovereign United Bengal," without an agreement between the Congress and the League, even if both Hindus and Muslims of Bengal desired it

Ibid, p 421

[Mountbatten returned from London with the revised plan on 31 May Gandhiji had arrived earlier and in view of the new differences — specially after Jinnah s new demands (claiming the whole of the Punjab and Bengal for Pakistan as well as a corridor across India) — he took up his negotiations with Mountbatten and Congress Working Committee] The hardening of the Congress attitude against the partition plan as a result of Jinnah's new demands, provided Gandhiji with another opportunity to persuade once more the Congress High Command as also the British Government, to revert to the Cabinet Mission plan as against Mountbatten's partition plan Gandhiji returned to his slogan,

"peace before partition " [Gandhiji argued] The Viceroy must refuse to have any parleys with the Muslim League before he had secured full implementation of the peace appeal to which Jinnah was co-signatory No less committed was the Viceroy, and he was a man of honour If the Congress did not weaken, the Muslim League would have to come to the Congress and talk reason instead of presenting its mounting demand at the point of the pistol as it had been hitherto doing

Ibid , pp 421-22

[The Congress Working Committee was to meet in the afternoon of 31 May] The Congress leaders cherished the belief that once partition was agreed to, peace would return to the land Gandhiji was emphatic that peace must precede partition, the partition before peace would be fatal As things were developing, the minorities would not be able to live in Pakistan after partition There would be mass migrations and chaos would follow

Ibid , p 422

[That morning Gandhiji was able to have only an incomplete conversation with Dr Rajendra Prasad We do not know what happened in the Working Committee But Pyarelal has recorded] "On the following morning, the 1st June, he [Gandhiji] woke up earlier than usual As there was still half an hour before prayer, he remained lying in bed and began to muse in a low voice Today I find myself all alone Even the Sardar and Jawaharlal think that my reading of the situation is wrong and peace is sure to return if partition is agreed upon They did not like my telling the Viceroy that even if there was to be partition, it should not be through British intervention or under the British rule They wonder if I have not deteriorated with age Nevertheless I must speak as I feel, if I am to prove a true and loyal friend to the Congress and to the British people, as I claim to be I see clearly that we are setting

about this business the wrong way We may not feel the full effect immediately, but I can see clearly that the future of independence gained at this price is going to be dark I cannot bear to see Badshah Khan's grief His inner agony wrings my heart But, if I gave way to tears, it would be cowardly and, the stalwart Pathan as he is, he would break down So I go about my business unmoved That is no small thing "But may be," he added after a pause, "all of them are right and I alone am floundering in darkness"

I shall perhaps not be alive to witness it, but should the evil I apprehend overtake India and her independence be imperilled, let posterity know what agony this old soul went through thinking of it *Let it not be said that Gandhi was party to India's vivisection* But everybody is today impatient for independence Therefore there is no other help he likened independence-cum-partition to a wooden loaf If they (the Congress leaders) eat it, they die of colic, if they leave it, they starve[1]

Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi The Last Phase*, Vol II (Ahmedabad, 1958), pp 210-11

Appendix—E

Gandhiji's Letters to Jawaharlal Nehru

June 7, 1947

The oftener we meet the more convinced I am becoming that the gulf between us in the thought world is deeper than I had feared He (the Sardar) says [there was one hour's discussion with the Sardar the previous night] that you are largely responsible for the present situation He is of the opinion that Badshah Khan's influence is on the wane Badshah Khan has not left any such impression on me Whatever he is today, he was always There is undoubtedly more steadiness today than before I also feel that Dr Khan

Saheb and his colleagues would be nowhere without the Badshah He alone counts in so far as the Congress influence is concerned

[Referring to his talks with Mountbatten he added] If the Qaid-e-Azam does not go to the Frontier and does not woo the Badhash, his brother and his other colleagues, the Frontier Ministry should resign and so also the Parliamentary majority on the sole ground that a referendum at this moment must lead to bloodshed and probably, if not certainly, to a lasting blood-feud, which they should avoid in so far as it is humanly possible Amrit [Rajkumari Amrit Kaur] tells me that you think to the contrary You think the referendum should take place now You are also of opinion that a referendum will not cause bloodshed, indeed that my proposal would be more likely to cause it I do not share this view I had told the Badshah that if I do not carry you with me, I shall retire at least from the Frontier consultation and let you guide him I will not and cannot interpose myself between you and him After all, was it not you who brought him to me? You will now decide and tell me

Chi Jawaharlal, June 9, 1947

I have your note [of 8 June 1947] which I have read most carefully If I shared your premises, I should whole-heartedly agree with you

I am sending your note by messenger to the Badshah with my covering letter

The more I contemplate the differences in outlook and opinion between the members of the W C and me, I feel that my presence is unnecessary even if it is not detrimental to the cause we all have at heart May I not go back to Bihar in two or three days?

Would it be wrong if you insisted that referendum would be wrong without the presentation of the picture of Pakistan?

Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol LXXXVIII, pp 94-95 and 113

Appendix—F

Sir C P Ramaswami Iyer, the Diwan of Travancore, condemned Gandhiji and the Congress for being willing to concede an independent Pathanistan for the Frontier Province How then could they object to an independent Travancore? he asked

Tendulkar, *op cit*, p 438

Gandhiji replied speaking at his prayer meeting "The analogy did not hold One was unadulterated autocracy, the other full democracy"

Ibid

[Gandhiji said] "He [Sir C P Ramaswami Aiyar] says further that Travancore has always been a free country This is right in a way In ancient days our country was divided into innumerable kingdoms but India was always considered one country Our saints and seers established places of pilgrimage in all parts of the country and did many things that promoted its social, economic and religious unity But politically the country was never united During the reigns of Chandragupta and Ashoka, India had to a large extent become unified but even so a small bit in the South remained outside the empire It was only when the English came that for the first time the country became one from Dibrugarh to Karachi and from Kanya Kumari to Kashmir The English did it not for our good but for their own It is wrong to say that Travancore was free under the British regime The Princes were never free They were vassals of the British, they were subservient to them Now when the British rule is on the way out and power is coming into the hands of the people, for any Prince to say that he was always independent and shall remain independent is wholly wrong and not in the least becoming True Sir C P has been a friend of mine But what of it? Even if it be my son why should I hesitate to say what is true? If when India is free Sir C P declares that Travancore is

independent, it means that he intends to enter into a conflict with free India"

Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol LXXXVIII, pp 151-52

[Gandhiji continued] "The Pathans did not seek to be independent They only wanted the freedom to frame their own constitution after the full face of Pakistan and the Indian Union was exposed to view They did not want to be a third state but only autonomous like any of the other provinces, owing allegiance to the Centre but having no interference in their internal affairs If Badshah Khan meant anything different he for one would have no hesitation in breaking with him, an old friend though he was What Sir C P, however, wanted was a state independent of both the dominions If this were allowed and the example followed by others, the consequence of it would be that India would be split up into several states These petty states would need an emperor and the emperor who was leaving might even return with redoubled force That would be a disaster too dreadful to contemplate The analogy between Travancore and Frontier Province was again misleading in that Sir C P spoke for the Maharaja, the Frontier leader spoke for the jirga, the people One was unadulterated autocracy, the other full democracy"

Tendulkar, *op cit*, p 438

[Gandhiji speaking about *"autonomous* provinces, owing allegiance to the Centre but having no interference in their internal affairs," correctly stated the constitutional position as articulated in the various declarations of the Constituent Assembly till then which was in line with the traditional Congress thinking in accordance with its 1920 constitution and the A I C C resolution of 8 August 1942 as well as the Government of India Act of 1935 But after the Partition had taken place, the Constitution was given a turn in the direction of a unitary system from which again there was a turn towards autonomy (for ensuring the accession of

Jammu and Kashmir) thus necessitating the introduction of Article 137 in the Constitution The trajectory had thus completed a zigzag, albeit a half-hearted one, in that the last turn was only for J&K and did not affect the rest of the country What is to be understood in retrospect, however, is the confusion and inconsistency in the thinking of the Nehru-Patel leadership in this period in that what they quite willingly granted to the Maharaja of J&K — the stand still agreement — a few months later, they had denied to a 25-year old grassroots strong democratic movement which had thrown in their lot with the Congress in the most difficult of times]

Appendix—G

[Gandhiji's Speech at Prayer Meeting on 18 June 1947]

I met Mr Jinnah yesterday I could not tell you about this meeting before because such a meeting had not been mooted When I was at the Viceroy's House, the Vicerory told me that Mr Jinnah was present there and that I should see him Well, I could not have refused I am the kind of person who would not hesitate to visit Mr Jinnah at his house We met and we agreed that it would be good if we also met Badshah Khan Then we were to see the Viceroy in the evening But Badshah Khan, like the humble man he is, had taken a bus to Deoband and it took him not three but five hours to get back and this meant that we could not see the Viceroy again in the evening

The Viceroy has left Delhi today but he would have been happy if we could have met We therefore went to Lord Ismay at 4-30 in the afternoon Badshah Khan has now gone to see Mr Jinnah at his residence and he is still with him

Do not please build any great hopes on this But we can certainly hope that the wound that we have received in the shape of Pakistan can be prevented from becoming

still deeper We can but strive The result is in the hands of God Let us pray that the effort may lead to a happy result

What would be a happy result in this instance? This, that the Pathans in the Frontier Province may all be united Pathans are a sword-happy people One can hardly find a Pathan who cannot wield a sword or a gun From generation to generation vendetta rules their lives but Badshah Khan saw that they could defend themselves better by dying than by killing He wanted the Pathans to develop this lofty courage and render service But before this dream could be realized this question of referendum came up

Some will now say that they want to be with Pakistan Some others will say that they will remain with the Congress And the Congress of course has come to be regarded by some as an organization of the Hindus This will create a schism among the Pathans and may lead to a strife which it may be difficult to curb They will indulge in mutual slaughter Badshah Khan wants that by some means it may be made possible for the Pathans to remain free without having to submit to a referendum They should make their own laws and remain united It would not then matter whether they chose Pakistan or India They say they have no money They are a poor people They do not want to be an independent nation But they would decide which country to join after they have got over the present quarrels

Then it also irks Dr Khan Saheb that some Hindus found it necessary to take refuge in Hardwar Therefore, Badshah Khan wants these Hindus to return to N W F P There are still numerous Hindus in the N W F P who are too poor to be able to leave They can feel secure only after this question of the referendum is settled It is for this that Badshah has gone to see the Quaid-e-Azam What he brings from there remains to be seen

Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol LXXXVIII, pp 173-74

Appendix—H

[Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Terms before Jinnah]

On June 18 [1947] Abdul Ghaffar accompanied by Gandhi met Jinnah at the Viceroy's house, and later again he met Jinnah at his residence Now that the division of India was accepted by the Congress, Abdul Ghaffar told Jinnah that the Pathans were quite agreeable to joining Pakistan, provided (1) it was on honourable terms, (2) in case Pakistan, after independence, decided to stay under the British domination [dominion?], the Pathans in the Settled Districts or in the tribal areas should have the power to opt out of such a dominion and form a separate independent state, and (3) all matters concerning tribal people should be settled by the Pathans themselves without the interference or domination of the non-Pathans—a right which had been conceded even by the existing Constituent Assembly The talks lasted over an hour in friendly atmosphere, although the attempt at compromise failed Jinnah accompanied Abdul Ghaffar to the waiting car to bid him farewell

Tendulkar, *op cit*, pp 436-37

Speaking at a prayer meeting on June 18 [1947] Gandhi said that Badshah Khan was straining every nerve to find some means of avoiding bloodshed in the Frontier Province He asked the congregation to pray with him for Badshah Khan's mission Referring to the movement for a free Frontier state called Pathanistan, he said that the movement had come to stay, for it was a solid movement If it was an anti-Indian movement, it was a bad and mischievous thing If it was meant to conserve, as he thought it was, Pathan life and culture, it deserved every encouragement Geographically, it was only a bit of India and numerically too, the Pathans were very few compared to the millions of India But their warlike qualities and their position on the map of India gave them an importance all their own

The Frontier was a Congress province It was so when the Congress was in the wilderness And it was now too when it was in power It was also represented on the Constituent Assembly But now it was face to face with a delicate position There was a referendum immediately to be held Both the Congress and the League were committed to it It was not open to any party to vary the terms The issue was to be Pakistan or Hindustan This had a sinister meaning in the context of what had happened in front of them Were they to be with the Hindus or with the Muslims? The Congress was not a Hindu organization It never was and, he hoped, never would be But how could the Pathan mind grasp the difference in the midst of confusion becoming worse confounded from day to day? He would advise the Congress to make its position clear and would ask the Muslim League also to do likewise Let both honour the Pathan sentiment and let the Pathans have their own constitution for internal affairs and administration It would promote Pathan solidarity, avoid internal conflict, retain Pakhtu culture and the Pakhtu language If they could do that, they would be better able unitedly to federate with Pakistan or the Union of India And this he would advise whether there was or was not a referendum Any premature referendum would be a leap in the dark

Gandhi, who had requested Abdul Ghaffar to meet Jinnah with his prayers, felt greatly disturbed over the result of the interview He kept awake till half-past twelve that night Getting up before the usual 3 o'clock in the morning, he began to ruminate 'I cannot cease thinking of Badshah Khan even when I have ceased to desire to live up to 125 years Badshah Khan is a prodigy I am seeing more and more of his deeply spiritual nature daily He has patience, faith and non-violence joined in true humility Countless Pathans have enshrined him in their hearts as their uncrowned king For such a person there can be no defeat I am sure he will not shrink from any sacrifice or suffering, but will die serving the Pathans with his last breath He lives only for

that He is a man of penance, also of illumination, with love for all and hatred towards none'

Ibid, pp 437-38

[After the broadbased meeting of the KKM leadership held in Bannu, Abdul Ghaffar Khan intimated Jinnah of the following resolution]

This meeting of the members of the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee, the Congress Parliamentary Party, the Khudai Khidmatgars and Zalme Pakhtuns held at Bannu on June 21, 1947, under the chairmanship of Khan Amir Mohammed Khan, President of the Frontier Provincial Committee, unanimously resolves that a free Pathan state of all the Pakhtuns be established The constitution of the state will be framed on the basis of Islamic conception of democracy, equality and social justice This meeting appeals to all the Pathans to unite for the attainment of this cherished goal and not to submit to any non-Pakhtun domination

Ibid, p 439

Appendix—I

Addressing a meeting on 27 June [1947], Abdul Ghaffar Khan stated

We have decided to establish Pathanistan, which will be an independent state of all the Pathans There will be no king and the land will be ruled by the entire Pathan nation jointly For this independence of the Pathans we sided with the Congress and we fought our common enemy jointly We were then called Hindus and Hindu agents, but now when we have refused to join Hindustan, we are forced to fight the referendum on the issue of Pakistan versus Hindustan

Let us organize for freedom from any domination After that we can keep brotherly relations with the other Muslim

countries in the interests of both Have not Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Arabia and Egypt their own separate governments? Are they not all Muslims? But even according to the very principles of Islam, charity begins at home Will it not be dishonest on my part to throw my Pathan brethren into the dark, unknown future? Not only we but the entire world is expecting a dreadful future The seeds of the third world war have already been sown Every country is trying to keep that war away from its frontiers For that emergency the Britishers want to make the Frontier Province a military base against Russia In this connection the arrival of General Montgomerry into India and his meetings with Mr Jinnah are indeed most significant

Ibid, p 441

Appendix—J

[Gandhiji's Speech at Prayer Meeting on 30 June 1947]

People are today watching the referendum that is about to be held in the Frontier Province because legally the Frontier Province has been and still is a Congress province Badshah Khan and his co-workers are being asked to choose between Pakistan and India The word Hindustan is being misunderstood as if Hindustan is Hindu and Pakistan is Muslim The problem before Badshah Khan is how to get out of this difficulty The Congress has pledged its word that after consultation with Dr Khan Sahib there should be a referendum in the Frontier Province under the direct supervision of His Excellency the Viceroy The referendum will thus be held on the appointed date

The Khudai Khidmatgars will not participate in the referendum. This will result in a clear victory for the Muslim League and the Khudai Khidmatgars will also not have acted in defiance of their inner voice, granting that they have one How does this violate any conditions of the

referendum? The Khudai Khidmatgars who have so long bravely fought the British are not going to be scared by defeat Various political parties take part in elections knowing full well that they will be defeated and when a party does not take part in an election the defeat is certain

Badshah Khan is chided for raising a new demand of Pakhtunistan As far as I can remember even before the formation of the Congress Ministry Badshah Khan was taken up with this notion of freedom for the Pathans in their homes Badshah Khan does not want to set up a separate State If he is only free to make his own constitution he will gladly join one of the two federations I can see no ground for objection to this demand of Pakhtunistan Of course if the idea is to teach the Pathans a lesson and to humble them anyhow, it is a different matter A serious charge levelled against Badshah Khan is that he is playing into the hands of Afghanistan I am quite sure that Badshah Khan cannot practise deceit against anyone He will never allow the Frontier Province to be absorbed into Afghanistan

As a friend of his I know that he has one weakness He has a suspicious nature and he has always suspected the intentions of the British I must ask him that he should get over this weakness, which is not peculiar to him It does not become a leader of his stature I have called this a weakness on his part and so it is, but it is also in a way his strong point, for even if he wants he cannot hide his opinions

Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol LXXXVIII, pp 248-49

Appendix—K

[After the Frontier Referendum was completed and the results declared Abdul Ghaffar Khan made a statement]

In the most adverse circumstances the referendum was held in our province The Khudai Khidmatgars were angry and dejected, they boycotted the referendum The question whether we wanted to join Hindustan or Pakistan was improper Hindustan had already deserted us and had handed us over to the enemies, hence it was against the Pakhtun pride and character to thrust ourselves on Hindustan On the issue of Pakistan, we already had given our firm verdict against joining it And, therefore, we demanded that if referendum was to be held, let it be on the issue of Pakhtunistan or Pakistan Our demand was ignored and the referendum on the issue of Hindustan or Pakistan was thrust upon us

The election results of 1946 gave a clear mandate to the Khudai Khidmatgars But the Britishers wanted to punish us by thrusting referendum on our province Elsewhere the provincial assemblies were asked to vote for Hindustan or Pakistan, but ours was treated as an exceptional case The representative character of the Frontier Province Assembly was ignored Out of disgust and anger we decided to place our grievance before the whole world and register our protest by boycotting the referendum What pained me most was that the Congress Working Committee did not stand by us and surrendered the Pakhtuns to the enemies in helpless condition In the case of Assam, when its Chief Minister, Bardoloi, opposed the grouping clause of the Cabinet Mission plan, the Congress Working Committee did not show that apathy and got the clause rescinded I was not against the grouping clause and when Gandhiji asked me the reason, I said that I can support any scheme but not the partition of India

Our people have been greatly disappointed by the weakness shown by the Congress I regret to say that

not we but the Congress deserted us If we had agreed to leave the Congress, the Britishers would have granted us all our demands, and it is my firm conviction that if the Congress lent support to our demand, as it had done in the case of Gurdaspur, Jinnah would have been compelled to agree to our proposal—Pakhtunistan or Pakistan Jinnah sent us messages time and again to make common cause with him, in which case he would concede to us whatever we wanted One such message came to me when the partition was being discussed by the Congress Working Committee It was to the effect that since India was in any case going to be divided, why did we not join him and the Muslim League and obtain whatever we wished We never compromised our principles

As we took no part in the referendum the Muslim League had no hurdles to cross In spite of violence, deception, fraud and the British complicity, the League got hardly 50 per cent votes, and the fate of the Pakhtuns was sealed

Tendulkar, *op cit*, pp 446-448

References

1 See P S Ramu (ed), *Momentous Speeches of Badshah Khan* (1992) This book contain summarised texts of the earliest recorded speeches of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, in 1931 in the Pakhtun rural interior and in 1934 in different parts of India during the speaker's externment from the province All this is from intelligence reports together with the Governor's assessment of their revolutionary content

2 See detailed bibliography in my earlier article in A K Gupta (ed), *Myth and Reality The Struggle for Freedom in India, 1945-47* (New Delhi, 1987)

3 The real source of information about the Mullah programme is Cunningham's Private Papers including his *Diary* S A Rittenberg was the first scholar to reveal this information See bibliography below

4 This super-secret document is published in the Appendix of Vol

XII of the *Transfer of Power* series (Doc 6, pp 800-806), as an afterthought, as it were

5 *History* (1983), Vol 68, No 1, pp 22-38

6 "Mountbatten, India and the Commonwealth" and "The Mountbatten Viceroyalty" both originally published in the *Journal of Commonwealth and Contemporary Studies* in 1982 and 1984 respectively and are included in R J Moore's latest book on India, *The Endgames of Empire* (New Delhi, 1988)

7 Khalid B Sayeed, *Pakistan The Formative Phase* (Oxford University Press, London, 1968)

8 See Sudhir Ghosh, *Gandhi s Emissary* (London, 1967) and Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi The Last Phase*, Vol II (Ahmedabad, 1958)

9 Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi The Last Phase*, Vol II, p 12

10 Abdul Ghaffar Khan in *Pakhtun*, official organ of the KKM, quoted in the *Times of India*, 29 July 1946 Quoted in n 9

Bibliography

The most easily available, but perhaps not widely read, book on the subject is D G Tendulkar's *Abdul Ghaffar Khan faith is a battle* (New Delhi, 1967) But some very critical details are to be found only in Pyarelal's *Mahatma Gandhi The Last Phase*, Vol II (1958), specially in chapter 12—'A Bastard Situation' pp 258-283
Much essential information, not available elsewhere, both about the crucial 1945-47 period as well as the decades following, is to be had in the *Oral History Interview of Girdhari Lal Puri* by Hari Dev Sharma, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library New Delhi He was a KKM activist and the Deputy Speaker of the NWFP Assembly as well as correspondent for *The Hindustan Times* Later he held important positions in India's Ministry of External Affairs

During the last two decades before he passed away, Abdul Ghaffar Khan had been dictating his reminiscences covering many critical aspects of his long political battle A collection of these auto-biographical writings in Pashto was published from Kabul a few years ago The publication of an authorized English version is now awaited An incomplete version had been available earlier—*My Life and Struggle*, Orient Paperback, 1969

Extremely lucidly written and very easy reading, Eknath Easwaran's *A Man To Match His Mountains Badshah Khan, Non-violent Soldier of Islam* is a very well-researched and at the same time an inspiring political biography of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and not to be missed Published in 1984 (and 1985) by the Blue Mountain Center of Meditation, Berkeley, California, U S A

My own earlier paper "Pakhtun National Movement and the Transfer of Power" was written for a seminar held in 1984 on "India's Freedom Struggle, 1945-47 and is available in the volume *Myth and Reality* edited by A K Gupta for the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library It contains a fairly extensive bibliography including the material relating to the Frontier in the *Transfer of Power* volumes

The best evidence of the misguided nature of Nehru's policy regarding the referendum is to be found in his own long note to Mahatma Gandhi on 8 June 1947 It was so palpably wrong and unconvincing that Pyarelal had called it 'ratiocination Both Pyarelal (1958) and Tendulkar (1967) and the *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (Vol LXXXVIII) gave long excerpts The full text plus some other notes by Nehru concerning the NWFP are now available in the *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, second series Vol 3, pp 273-279 Gandhiji wrote to Nehru that his general disagreement on the subject of partition was sharpest on the question of the NWFP

The most complete political history of the North-West Frontier Province during the first five decades of this century was written by Stephen Alan Rittenberg as a Ph D thesis for Columbia University USA in 1977

I am largely indebted to this work (even without agreeing with all his conclusions) which I was able to read in microfilm Fortunately it has since been published in a revised version—*Ethnicity Nationalism and the Pakhtuns The Independence Movement* (Durham Carolina Academic Press 1988)

There is another Ph D thesis, 'Pakhtun National Self-determination The Partition of India and Relations with Pakistan (x + 272 pp) by a scholar from Afghanistan Ahmad Sha Mohabbat (Saint Louis University USA, 1979 — available in microfilm only) which gives a much more detailed account of Pakhtun resistance against Britain s colonial conquest and occupation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries than any other work It also traces the transition of the old KKM into the new National Awami Party after the formal end of the military dictatorship in Pakistan

A remarkable book on the Gandhian philosophy and the dialectic of the mass movements launched by Gandhi and his followers, *The Conquest of Violence* by Joan Bondurant California University Press, 1958, has about twenty pages on the Hindu Mulsim question and the nature of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement This is the best *philosophical* treatment of Ghaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars to date

Till the full authorized version of his autobiography is published in English much crucial information is available only in the written statement given by Badshah Khan at his trial before the High Court of West Pakistan on 6 September 1956 This is reproduced as Appendix—B in Pyarelal's *Thrown to the Wolves* Appendix—A, consisting of Ghaffar Khan's notes on the aims and objects of the KKM written about the same period is also very important

6

Non-Violence in Islam

Syeda Saiyidain Hameed

Wa inna hazihi ummatukum ummatan waahidatan
And verily this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood
Fataqatta-u amrahum bainuhum zubura·
But people have cut off their affair (of unity), Between them, into sects

Al Muminun 23 52-53

The Pathans of the North-West Frontier were a deeply devout but severely divided people When Abdul Ghaffar Khan was born, his people had already struggled against the British for fifty years Son of an eminent family, he was deeply committed to two things unification and uplift of his people, and freedom from the British Despite all their efforts, the British had been unable to either subjugate the Pathans, or to integrate them under their direct control in all the areas east and south of the Durand Line Their precarious hegemony over the tribal areas adjoining the Durand Line could only be established through bribing the Maliks and the Khans and through entering into treaties

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's struggle against the British meant a struggle against the system through which they had established their hegemony A mode of struggle had

to be evolved which was practical as well as temperamentally suited to his people The tribals, living in extreme poverty, scanty agricultural produce, zero commerce and industry, could not, at this time, support the establishment of political parties like the Indian National Congress In the primarily rural settlements, among a feuding tribal culture, he chose to establish his organisation of Khudai Khidmatgars and opted for the use of non-violent means for freedom from the British and uplift of his people

Of his non-violent creed, Abdul Ghaffar Khan said "There is nothing surprising in a Mussulman or a Pathan like me subscribing to the creed of non-violence It is not a new creed It was followed 1,400 years ago by the Prophet all the time he was in Mecca, and it has since been followed by all those who wanted to throw off an oppressor's yoke "[1]

What is the concept of non-violence in Islam which created an unprecedented historical paradox — the non-violent Pathan?

In Arabic the word 'Islam' is derived from the root *silm* i e 'to be at perfect peace' Islam means submission, resignation, reconciliation (to the will of God) For many, however, the religion Islam evokes a violent and militant image, tagged at the end of the catch-all word 'fundamentalism' This image, built over centuries by certain orientalists and used indiscriminately by the popular press, is misleading as well as erroneous because nowhere from the *Quran*, the *Hadith* or the *Sunnah* can this image of violence or militancy be authenticated Using these three sources, it is possible to filter from the morass of popular misunderstanding the word and fact of Islam It is also possible to understand the seeming anomaly that the non-violent creed taught by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan to his warlike Path-ns was, in fact, based on the tenets of Islam

At once simple and complex, the Quranic injunctions cannot be studied in isolation of the society upon which they were revealed The geophysical factor here is significant Jaziratul Arab or the Arabian peninsula is bounded almost

on all sides by seas and rivers, the Indian Ocean on the south, the Mediterranean and the Red Sea on the west, the Persian Gulf on the east and the Tigris and the Euphrates traversing its eastern and northern parts Large tracts of stark relentless deserts, dotted by a few areas of 'nakhlistan', where date palms and fresh water pools are the life source of the Bedouin and the camel, produce a hardy, rugged, doughty, barbarous race Among its provinces the most important was Hedjaz Makka, Medina and Taif were its chief townships Makka, ringed by mountains, has always been regarded as the religious capital of Arabia Within its precincts is the sacred Kaaba or House of God, the foundation of which was laid by Prophet Abraham on Divine injunction Warfare is strictly forbidden in the holy territory, especially during the four months of Shawwal, Zelkadeh, Zilhijah and Muharram, Zilhijah being the month ordained for Hajj The original name of Medina was Yethreb, which also became known as *Medinatun Nabi* after the Hijrat, in 622 AD, and is situated 270 miles from Makka Both cities are replete with Islamic significance, the one being the birthplace of the Prophet, the location for the revelation of the *Quran* and Prophethood, while the other is the refuge of the first Muslims, the vanguard of Islam, and the place where the Prophet of Islam is buried

Arabia before Islam, to quote the *Quran*, was "on the verge of a fiery abyss" The country was torn apart by internecine feuds, tribe against tribe and clan against clan Thoroughly barbaric, sunk in superstition, cruelty and vice, Arabs led a nomadic life, wandering with their sheep and camels, halting and pitching their tents wherever they found water and pasture Social mores were the concomitant of this lifestyle Their religion was idolatry, every stone or object could be regarded as a god or a goddess Three hundred sixty idols, representing all the gods and goddesses worshipped in the region, were lying along the walls of the Kaaba Sacrifices were sacrosanct Even human sacrifices were not infrequent

Have ye seen
Lat, and Uzza,
And another,
The third (goddess) Manat?

Al Najm 53 19-20

In the male dominated society women were the lowest chattel Female infanticide, practised in some quarters, was the outcome of the belief that to have a daughter was the ultimate shame Sometimes the mothers were required to perform the killing If the girl child was spared at birth she became a beast of burden until death, not having entitlement to any share in the property of her father or her husband

When news is brought
To one of them, of (the birth of)
A female (child), his face Darkens, and he is filled
With inward grief!
With shame does he hide Himself from his people,
Because of the bad news he has had!
Shall he retain it
On (sufferance and) contempt,
Or bury it in the dust?

Al Nahl 16 58-59

Corruption and degeneracy existed not only among the descendants of Arab aboriginals—Ad, Thamud and Medinites, but also among the Jews and others In the Kaaba there was one idol for every belief Followers of Abraham had an idol of their Prophet along with his son Ismail The idol of Mary with the child Jesus in her lap was also ranged along the wall Sir William Muir summarizes the condition of Christianity

" .Christi..nity of the 7th century was itself decrepit and corrupt It was disabled by contending schisms, and had substituted the puerilities of superstition for the pure and expansive faith of the early ages "[2]

Prophet Muhammad's lineage is traced ultimately from Ismail, son of Abraham Adnan, the earliest progenitor of this line, descended from Ismail In his third generation there was Nasir bin Kinnana who founded the dynasty of the Quraish In the ninth place comes Qusayy who was entrusted with the guardianship of the Kaaba — a trust of high honour He was the great grandfather of the Prophet's grandfather Abdul Muttalib Among the ten sons of Abdul Muttalib were Abdullah, the Prophet's father, Abu Lahab, the Prophet's arch-enemy, and Abu Talib who brought him up after he was orphaned He was born on 12th Rabi-ul-awwal, of the year 571 AD, a posthumous child, handed over, according to the Arabic custom by his mother Amina, to a nurse Halima who reared him among her village tribe of Banu Saad Brought up with great affection and care, first by his grandfather, then by his uncle, the Prophet was not given any formal education as was customary among the high-born In the *Quran, Suratul Al Araf* he is referred to as 'The unlettered Prophet' (an Nabi al ummi) In the first instance, he found himself engaged in commerce and visiting all the centres of Arab business interest His integrity and truthfulness earned him the title of Al Amin or the Just Cases of potential strife were referred to him in his pre-Prophethood days Once the Kaaba was to be reconstructed—a task which the pre-eminent tribe of Quraish undertook—but a dispute arose as to who would be given the privilege of laying the Hajr-e-Aswad or Black Stone Muhammad placed the stone on a sheet of cloth, and invited the headmen of all clans to hold the sheet for laying the stone in its original place This lesson for avoiding intertribal feuds, and consequent destruction of many families is first in a series of non-violent attitudes

The Islamic view of violence and non-violence is expressed in terms of the wars in which the Prophet found himself engaged—the circumstances, sanctions and consequences of these wars, and the general injunctions based on specific events Reverting, therefore, to the sequence of events, the

Prophet of Islam, intensely persecuted by the Makkans, was forced to leave his ancestral home Here at the cave of Hira he had received the first *wahy* or revelation, here he had preached the fledgling faith to anyone who cared to listen and here at the cave of Thaur he lay concealed for three days He reached Medina on 2 July 622 AD, a few days earlier than the commencement of the Islamic calendar on the first of Moharrum (The Western orientalists' deliberate campaign to misinform the public about the Prophet's mission is evident in the use of the phrase 'flight of Mohammad' for Hijrat when the word migration' is its literal translation) Medina became the cradle of Islam since the first mosque was built here by the Prophet by his own hands with the help of the Muhajireen-i-Makka and the Ansars—the residents of Medina Islam's first muezzin was the slave Bilal, whose call for prayer seemed to carry, as it were, to the farthest reaches of Arabia and beyond

The Makkans, intensely hostile to the increase in the Prophet's following, advanced towards Medina with an army, despite the fact that the Medinites, on instruction from the Prophet, had not blocked their trade route that lay through Medina The Prophet's first battle took place in the Valley of Badr in 2 A H , where despite their numerical inferiority, 313 Muslims stood poised against the Makkan army The man who had never wielded a weapon, whose tenderness and pathos caused his enemies to call him 'womanish'[3] was compelled by the necessities of the situation and against his own inclination to recite the *rajz* of war In the *Quran* the simple recurring injunction is

> To those against whom
> War is made, permission
> Is given (to fight), because
> They are wronged
>
> *Al Hajj*—22 39

Over a thousand well-equipped men under the generalship of Abu Jahl ('The Father of Ignorance') fell upon the small band of disciples, and, in the battle that followed, several leaders and the most experienced warriors of Arabia, including 'the inveterate persecutor of Islam'[4] were killed

> God had helped you
> At Badr, when ye were
> A contemptible little force
>
> *Al Imran*—3 123

The rationale for going to war was the imminent danger to Islam from the sworn enemies of the faith In the *Quran* there is a clear directive

> *Wa qaatilu fi sabilillahi llazina yuqaatilu nakum*
> *Wala tatadu wa innallaha*
> *La yuhibbul mutadin*[5]

The important words are *wa qaatilu fi sabilillahi'*, i e 'Fight in the cause of Allah, those who fight you'

In the aftermath of the war, several prisoners taken by the Muslims were treated with kindness and mercy, in emulation of the recurrent description of Allah as being 'full of kindness and mercy'—*Wa innallaha 'rauf-ur-rahim'*[6]

The division of spoils, however, led to sharp dissensions among the Muslim soldiers The Prophet calmed them down by dividing the spoils equally among all In Arab Jahiliyat the practice was that war spoils became the property of whoever laid hands on them Realizing the contentious nature of this issue, the Prophet promulgated a special ordinance, which is incorporated in the chapter of the *Quran* *Al Infal* (Spoils of War) By this law the division of the spoils was left to the discretion of the chief of the commonwealth, a fifth being reserved for the poor and indigent In his commentary on this chapter, Abul Kalam Azad compares the Arab Jahiliyat's attitude to spoils with the British penchant for *maal-e-ghanimat* as reflected in the looting which followed their victory over Srirangapatnam

and Hyderabad, and the seven days after the fall of Delhi in 1857 when the British soldiery was allowed to go on a wild rampage

Meanwhile, Medina was being honeycombed by sedition and treachery At the slightest nod form the Quraish, the Jews of Yethreb were ready to break the covenant they had made with the Prophet Therefore, it became his duty to guard against that dreaded catastrophe which rising from within, or a sudden attack from without, would have entailed upon his followers At this moment, he was not simply a preacher of Islam, but was also the guardian of the lives and liberties of his people As a Prophet he could afford to ignore the revilings and jibes of his enemies, but as the head of state at the time of almost continual warfare, when Medina was kept in a state of military defence and under a sort of military discipline, he could not overlook treachery He was bound by duty to his subjects to suppress a party that might have led and almost did lead to the sack of a city by investing armies The safety of the state required the proscription of the traitors who were either sowing the seeds of sedition within Medina or carrying information to a common enemy It was incumbent upon him to repel the attacks of the enemy by force of arms, to organize his followers for self-defence, and often to send out expeditions to anticipate treacherous and sudden onslaughts Hence the forcefulness of the Quranic injunction

> Will ye not fight people
> Who violated their oaths,
> Plotted to expel the Apostle,
> And took the aggressive
> By being the first (to assault) you?
> Fight them, and God will
> Punish them by your hands
>
> *Al Tauba*—9 13-14

The Prophet's second major battle was fought along the

hill of Ohod in the third year of the Hijrat This time the proportion was one to three in favour of the Quraish Victory had almost been declared for the Muslims when the archers, forgetting the instructions of the Prophet, and seeing the enemy in flight, dispersed in search of plunder Hamza, the great warrior of Arabia, was killed, Ali, Omar and Abu Bakr, the closest associates of the Prophet were wounded The Prophet was injured but his friends formed a huddle to protect him Retreating to the heights of Mount Ohod, Ali fetched water in his shield from the hollow of a rock and washed his wounds The moral lessons of Ohod are too numerous to be recalled, but a few may be mentioned First, during the course of Ohod a cry was raised that the Prophet had been killed, causing great demoralization among the Muslims Hence the Quranic revelation

> Muhammad is no more
> Than an Apostle many
> Were the Apostles that passed away
> Before him If he died
> Or were slain, will ye then
> Turn back on your heels?

Al Imran—3 144

Second, the injunction that the ultimate reward and punishment should be left to Allah Although the Muslims were justified in defending themselves

> But indeed if any do help
> And defend themselves
> After a wrong (done)
> Against such there is no cause of blame

Al Shura—42 41

But they were expected to do no more than their duty Allah would dispense the justice according to a design that is often incomprehensible to the human intellect

Not for thee, (but for God)
Is the decision
Whether He turn in mercy
To them, or punish them

Al Imran—3 128

The third lesson was of gross physical violence While retreating from the Battle, the Quraish barbarously mutilated their dead enemies The morbid incident of Hind, Abu Sufiyan's wife, tearing out Hamza's heart and making bracelets and necklaces of the ears and noses of the dead made the Prophet forbid for once and for all the practice of mutilation of corpses that prevailed among all nations of antiquity, at the same time, exhorting the Muslims "Bear wrong patiently, verily, best it will be for the patiently enduring "

The third incident pertains to peace, not war, and is referred in history as Sulh-e-Hudaibiya Thus, the first initiative of the Prophet against the Makkans, the arch-enemies of Islam, reflects the true working of his mind His was a deliberate act of choosing peace instead of war, of opting for retreat, thereby avoiding hundreds of war casualties

Six years had passed since the Prophet and his companions were driven from Makka and expelled from the precincts of the Kaaba Driven by their longing to perform pilgrimage at the holy shrine, seven hundred Muslims led by the Prophet, set out on the journey Although the Quraish were mere custodians, not owners of Kaaba and, therefore, not authorized by any law of the land to interdict the approach of even an enemy, they posted themselves at every point of access to the city, to ensure that the Muslims could not enter The Prophet was justified to fight because the issue was freedom to worship, the little Muslim community had as much right to worship at the Kaaba as the rest of the Quraish The principle involved was one of *all* worship, Jewish or Christian, as well as

Muslim Little incidents had taken place which could have plunged the Quraish and Muslims into a fight But the Prophet had a peace-offensive in mind, thereby maintaining the Peace of the Sanctuary Surah 48 *Al Fat-h* is based on the Treaty of Hudaibiya

> And it is He who
> Has restrained their hands
> From you and your hands
> From them in the midst
> Of Mecca, after that He
> Gave you the victory
> Over them

Al Fat-h—48 24

It was on this occasion that the Muslims took the pledge called Baiat-ur-Rizwan or Baiat-ush-Shajr[7], to 'flight for their faith,' but the Prophet, determined to end the state of warfare between the Muslims and the Quraish, expressed his willingness to agree to any terms the Makkans might impose After intense negotiations a treaty was concluded, by which it was agreed that all hostilities would cease for ten years Among other clauses was the ultra conciliatory one that the Muslims, without advancing further, would retrace their steps but should be permitted in the following year to visit Makka and remain there for three days with their travelling arms The moderation and magnanimity displayed by the Prophet in concluding this treaty caused discontent among some of his impulsive followers The Quraish, blustering and excited, objected to the introductory words of the treaty such as 'in the name of Allah ' They were unwilling to accept the Prophet's signature which included the words 'Mohammed, Rasool Allah' The Prophet asked Ali to strike out the appellation 'Prophet of God' When Ali pleaded his inability to do so, the Prophet struck off the 'offensive' words and substituted 'Mohammed, son of Abdullah' The Quranic rendering expresses the importance of self-restraint

While the Unbelievers
Got up in their hearts
Heat and cant—the heat
And cant of Ignorance,—
God sent down His tranquillity
To his Apostle and to
The Believers, and made them
Stick close to the command
Of self-restraint

Al Fat-h—48 26

The command here is for Muslims to exercise self-restraint as much as possible Force is a dangerous weapon It may have to be used for *self-defence* or *self-preservation*, but *self-restraint*, the *Quran* says again and again, is more pleasing in the eyes of Allah Fighting for principle rather than passion is permissible

Earlier in the Surah, the words are *"Huwal lazi anzalas sakinata fi qulub-il-Mominin,"* meaning "it is He who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the Believers"

In terms of the principle of violence, from the battles of Badr and Ohod, discussed earlier, and the Peace of Hudaibiya, it is evident that war is permissible only when the patently aggressive behaviour of the enemy becomes evident When undertaken, it must be vigorous combat but not relentless Strict limits must not be transgressed women, children, old and infirm men should not be molested, nor trees and crops cut down, nor peace withheld when the enemy comes to terms These were unprecedented religious injunctions in those times

And fight them on
Until there is no more
Tumult or oppression,
And there prevail
Justice and faith in God,
But if they cease,

Let there be no hostility
Except to those
Who practise oppression

Al Baqara—2 193

A few Quranic injunctions about violence which have become cliche need to be discussed briefly All Semetic religions have provision for *just retribution* The *Quran* is no exception In several Surahs the concept of this justice is explained

We ordained therein for them
"Life for life, eye for eye,
Nose for nose, ear for ear,
Tooth for tooth, and wounds
Equal for equal " But if anyone
Remits the retaliation
By way of charity, it is
An act of atonement for himself

Al Maida—5 48

In another Surah, the injunction goes a step further than *"Faman tassadaqa bihi falmwa kaffaratun lah"*, stating that not only does the remitter atone for his own sins, by forgiveness he earns his just reward from Allah

The recompense for an injury
Is an injury equal thereto
(In degree) but if a person
Forgives and makes reconciliation
His reward is due
From God for (God)
Loveth not those who do wrong

Al Shura—42 40

The rationality underlying the act of forgiveness is made more explicit in the next few lines

> But indeed if any
> Show patience and forgive,
> That would truly be
> An exercise of courageous will
> And resolution in the conduct
> Of affairs
>
> *Al Shura*—42 43

The retribution theme is further elaborated with the emphasis being the transformation affected by *humanistic treatment of evil,* a far cry from *'Wal aina bil ainee'* concept which would have struck an instant chord in the ingenuous Bedouin mind The Muslims were being shown the higher rationality for non-violence

> Nor can Goodness and Evil
> Be equal Repel (Evil)
> With what is better
> Then will he between whom
> And thee was hatred
> Become as it were
> Thy friend and intimate!
> And no one will be
> Granted such goodness
> Except those who exercise
> Patience and self-restraint
>
> *Al Fussilat*—41 34-35

Innumerable *Hadith* of the Prophet on non-violence have been recorded which is not surprising because the untamed Bedouins had to be reminded again and again *Sahih Bukhari,* regarded the best among the *Hadith* literature, records the Prophet in the chapter entitled, *Kitab al Mazaalim,* (The Book of Oppression) "Help your brother whether he is an aggressor or a victim of aggression" The Prophet was asked, how can we help the aggressor? He replied, "By doing your

best to stop him from aggression " Violence is condemned by the words — "Those who commit violence — God has given them respite only until the day their eyes become glazed"

In the *Hadith* attributed to Abu Hurairah and Tirmidhi, the theme of love for the fellow-men is expressed in words without which no religious scripture of the world is complete

"He who shows not compassion to his fellow-man is undeserving of God's compassion" (Tirmidhi)

"He who is not affectionate to God's creatures and his own children would not receive the affection of God " (Abu Hurairah)

In the year of the Deputations i e 9 A H the Prophet sent teachers all over Arabia, as well as to Herculeus, Emperor of Greece, and Khusro Parvaiz, the Kesra of Persia—always giving them the following instruction

"Deal *gently* with the people, and be not *harsh*, cheer them and *condemn them not*, and ye will meet with many people of the Book who will question thee, what is the key to Heaven? Reply to them, to testify to the truth of god, *and to do good work*"

One tenent of Islam, concomitant with non-violence, especially as it was manifested in the Khudai Khidmatgar movement of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is *unity* The emphasis on unity and brotherhood was contrapositive for the warring tribes of Arabia (as also to tribes of the North-West Frontier), engaged for generations in internecine wars The Prophet's objective was to knit them into a fraternity

> And hold fast
> All together by the Rope
> Which God (stretches out for you),
> Among yourselves
> And be not divided
> And remember with gratitude
> God's favour on you,
> For ye were enemies

And He joined your hearts
In love, so that by His Grace,
Ye became brethren

Al Imran—3 103

This concept of unity in the *Quran* according to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's *The Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, has a wider scope than unity only among Muslims In *Surah-e-Fatiha*, Allah is *Rabb-ul-Alimeen* (Lord of Creation) not *Rabb-ul-Muslimeen* (Lord of Muslims) Of the Prophet, the *Quran* says, "*Ina Arsalnaka Rahmatal lil Alamin*" i e Prophet came as the *rahmat* of mankind The Prophet's *Hadith* states, "No Muslim can become a Mumin unless he likes for all others (not only the Muslims) what he likes for himself and he makes friends with them for God's sake"[8] To take this a step further, in the *Quran* a distinction is made between the just (Adil) and the unjust (Zalim), i e those who believe in peaceful living and those who are opposed to it The contention of K G Saiyidain in his book *Islam The Religion of Peace* is that this gives an entirely new dimension to the meaning of Mumin and Kafir—defining them not in narrow theological terms, but in broad human terms which transcend formal religious differences

The creed of violence is antithetical to universal brotherhood which some, *mujtahids* claim is the ultimate objective of Islam The word of the *Quran*, they say, attests to this fact Since Islam allows its followers the right of personal interpretation of the *Quran*, therefore, it follows, that while one may agree or disagree with an interpretation but an *ijtehad* may not be branded right or wrong Azad interprets the *Sura-e-Fatiha* to contain the quintessance of the universal man In *The Tarjuman al-Qur'an* Vol I he describes *Al Fatiha* as a form of a prayer addressed by man to Allah, in which he pours out his heart's yearnings and describes his concept of the kind of man he would like to become He prays for the good of *all men*, whatever their race, religion, colour or status, he is anxious to follow the

right and straight path, which is not a narrowly circumscribed path, but the path of *all those* who have been blessed by God's grace He wished to avoid the path of *all those* who have incurred His displeasure by their misdeeds and denial of His guidance

Despite the fact that war is permitted in the *Quran* after fulfilling several conditionalities, the overall feeling after closing the Book and returning once again to the opening chapter, *Surah-e-Fatiha*, is that in this scheme of universality, there is little room for violence Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, like his spiritual peers, Gandhi and Azad, understood Islam in this—its most universal sense This view of Islam was the bedrock of his lifelong mission Gandhi understood the integrity of his thought and action when he wrote, "His politics, if he had any, were derived from his religion "[9] His mission was sanctioned by his faith, in fact as they both matured, it became difficult to keep them apart The lesson of non-violence that he taught his men was underpinned by the concept of universal brotherhood

"All mankind is a single community"

Al Baqara—2 213

Ya ayyuhun naas-o-inna khalaquakum min
Zakarin wa unsa wa jaalnakum shu-u-ban
Wa qabail-a-le taarafu
O Mankind! We created you from a single (pair)
Of a male and female, and made you into
Nations and tribes, that ye may know each other

Al Hujurat—49 13

In the final analysis it is evident that Quranic injunctions were not only for the immediate present or the geographical area in which they were revealed but the principles enunciated had the capacity to apply to very different and much more complicated future situations Detailed or specific rules about the exact course of action to be followed in all circumstances were not prescribed Islam encouraged man

to use his own intellect (stay away from ignorance) and adjust to the needs of a changing situation

> Command what is right,
> But turn away from the ignorant
>
> *Al Araf*—7 199

Applying his intellect to his time and space, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, in accordance with the tenets of Islam, created a non-violent army of over one million Servants of God

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7

Islam and Non-Violence

Asghar Ali Engineer

Islam has been so integrally associated with 'sword' that one can hardly associate it with non-violence *'Quran* in one hand sword in the other' is the popular stereotype and this stereotype is very widely disseminated indeed This stereotype arose during the crusades in 12th and 13th centuries Thereafter whenever any conflicting and confrontational situation arose between Muslims in the East and Christians in the West, this stereotype was popularized It should be remembered that those prejudices which arise during a particular conflict between two persons or communities, get further hardened during further conflicts And during course of time these prejudices acquire facticity of its own and no amount of argument would diminish their intensity

During the 19th century the colonial West sought to establish its complete hegemony over the Islamic countries and thus came into intense conflict with them during that period The Islamic countries came under Western subjugation to varying degrees This situation lasted, in certain cases, for over a century The Islamic world was in turmoil all through the period and conflict between these Islamic nations and the West remained intense Islam and Islamic nations were consequently projected as violent,

fanatical and barbaric, refusing to accept the domination by the 'civilized' West

In Indian situation too, the *Qur'an* and sword stereotype found ready acceptance for obvious reasons Muslims were seen as invaders and aggressors They came in hordes and conquered India and subjugated it with the power of their swords They not only conquered India with sword but also held it under their sway for several centuries During the 19th century when British rule was established in India and Indians, particularly the Hindus, having acquired Western secular education and imbibed modern liberal ideas, felt ashamed that they had to remain under the sway of outsiders for centuries This sense of hurt was further aggravated when they discovered their own glorious past They felt that though they had great achievements to their credit in the pre-Islamic past, they got subjugated and they had to live under Muslim subjugation for several centuries Naturally, they found it soothing to blame Islam and its fanatical and violent nature for their subjugation rather than themselves

Thus it will be seen that there were many takers for the stereotype '*Qur'an* in one hand and sword in the other' Even today many non-Muslims continue to argue vehemently that Islam preaches conversion through sword, if other methods fail Some Quranic verses are also adduced in corroboration of their argument Those who are not well-versed in the Quranic text and context, history and causes of revelation (*asbab-al-nuzul*) easily get convinced about the 'violent and war-mongering' nature of Islam The concept of *jihad* has also created serious misunderstanding in the minds of both Muslims and non-Muslims *Jihad* is often understood as a war of aggression, subjugator of non-Muslims and imposing *jizya* over them It is no wonder then if Islam and violence have become an integral whole

II

Islam is not a religion of violence, neither violence is integral to it The very word 'Islam' is the very negation of the concept of violence Islam means, surrender to the will of God on one hand, and establishing peace, on the other The word for peace in Arabic is *'salam'* When Muslims greet each other they invoke peace — *salam alaykum* (peace be on you) Not only Muslims, all human beings could be greeted with these words Thus it is a religious duty of a Muslim to strive for the establishment of peace in society Muslim is one who surrenders to the will of Allah and is establisher of peace (while Islam means establishment of peace, Muslim means one who establishes peace through his action and conduct)

Also, surrender to the will of Allah compels him to strive for the establishment of peace Allah is merciful and compassionate — *al-Rehaman, al-Rahim* Violence and mercy and violence and compassion cannot go together One who is merciful and compassionate, cannot issue any commandment for needless violence Violence at best could be permitted by a Compassionate Being only to remove sufferings and injustices It is this aspect of *jihad* which is necessary to understand We will come to this point a little later Also, Allah is Just—*Adil* and He commands others to do justice He commands in the *Holy Qur'an,* "Be just, that is nearer to observance of duty" (5 8) He also requires that hatred of others should not motivate you to do injustice to them It would be unjust Thus in the same verse it is said, "O you who believe, be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice, and let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably".

Thus it is the will of Allah that justice should prevail and even hatred of a people should not motivate a believer to commit an act of injustice And justice demands that needless and uncalled for violence should not be perpetrated

That itself would be a great injustice A Muslim, who surrenders himself/herself to the will of Allah, cannot shed a drop of blood without a very compelling reason for the same

A Muslim is not permitted to use coercion, let alone violence, in preaching his religion "There is no compulsion in religion", declares the *Qur'an* in ringing words and continues, "the right way is indeed clearly distinct from error So whoever disbelives in the devil and believes in Allah, he indeed lays hold on the firmest handle which shall never break" (2 256) Thus it is clear from this verse that you can lay hand on 'the firmest handle' only if *'din'* is accepted through inner conviction, not through coercion If compulsion or coercion in any form is used, the handle would break One can have grip over 'firmest handle' (*urwah al-wuthqa*) only through inner conviction

Maulana Muhammad Ali a noted commentator on the *Qur'an*, commenting on the above verse, says, "To all the nonsense which is being talked about the Prophet offering Islam or the sword as alternatives to the pagan Arabs, this verse is a sufficient answer Being assured of success, the Muslims are told that when they hold the power in their hand their guiding principle should be that there should be no con pulsion in the matter of religion" (*Holy Qur'an*, Lahore, 1973, p 111, f n 342) The Maulana also tells us that "The presumption that this passage was directed to the early converts and that it was abrogated later on is utterly baseless" (*Ibid*)

Not only the *Qur'an* clearly declares that there is no compulsion in religion, it also lays down, in no uncertain words, the methodology of preaching The *Qur'an* declares, "Call to the way of thy Lord *with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the best manner*", (*Qur'an*, 16 125) (emphasis added) Thus there should be no doubt left in any one's mind about methodology of preaching advocated by the *Qur'an* It has to be done with wisdom and a Muslim has to argue the case with convincing and

appealing arguments and that too in the best possible manner Even the good arguments, if made rudely and with an element of anger, looses its appeal The *Qur'an* takes care of this aspect too Thus its methodology of preaching cannot be faulted

Not only this, the *Qur'an* specifically prohibits Muslims from abusing those who believe in gods other than Allah It says, "And abuse not those whom they [i e non-believers] call upon besides Allah, lest, exceeding the limits, they abuse Allah through ignorance" (6 109) Not only that the *Qur'an* prohibits believers from abusing others' gods, it also makes it clear to them that "Thus to every people have We made their deeds fair-seeming, then to their Lord is their return so He will inform them of what they did" (6 109)

It is important to note here that according to the *Qur'an* abusing others' gods is counter-productive, not only that to every people their deeds (ways of worshipping included) seem quite fair to them and it is this sense of fairness which is important, not the way of worshipping In other words, if one has a particular way of worshipping, it not only seems fair to him but it is also based on his inner conviction. Muslims may not accept that way of worshipping but they must learn to coexist in harmony with them The *Qur'an* also throws a challenge to the believers in this respect (i e harmonious coexistence with others' ways of beliefs) This challenge is thrown in these words, "If Allah had pleased He would have made you a single people, but that He might try you in what He gave you [diversity of beliefs] So vie one with another in virtuous deeds " (5 48)

Allah has appointed a law and a way for every community and they must coexist in harmony and excel each other in good deeds If the *Qur'an* advocates this philosophy how can it advocate use of violence in compelling others to embrace Islam Had it advocated violence the above verses would have made no sense whatever at all The myth of the *Qur'an* and sword arose much later and, as pointed out before, its causes should

be seen in history, not in the *Qur'an* Also, the *Qur'an* makes distinction between faith (which includes ways of worshipping and associated rituals) and one's overall situation, social as well as political It is certainly not faith which calls for violence, it is one's own socio-political situation which might demand it Violence used under certain social circumstances cannot be blamed on one's *din* (faith) The *Qur'an* adopts a radically different position as far as faith is concerned It is most tolerant and liberal

Islam believes all those who believe in God, Day of Judgement (that is one will have to account for one's deeds) and perform good deeds, will be equally rewarded, irrespective of one's religion Be he a Muslim, a Jew, a Christian or a Sabian, if he has faith in God and Day of Judgement and does good will have his reward (2 62) It is the most tolerant position one can think of It is wrong to think that Islam condemns all other religions To the contrary It repeatedly says that the Prophet has come to confirm the truth which already exists (*musaddiqan li ma bayna yadayn*) He is no bringer of new truth and hence there is no question of condemning truth revealed to other prophets

III

What is the place of violence in Islam? Is Islam a non-violent religion then? The answer, to be honest and to be truthful to life, is both yes and no Islam does not advocate violence but does not shun it altogether Life is full of contradictions and these contradictions do reflect themselves in what we can call a contextual theology, if it wishes to be true to life The *Qur'an* does not advocate mere abstract theological and metaphysical doctrines The Quranic theology does not neglect the concrete socio-political context All scriptures, on close scrutiny, would be found to contain contextual contradictions And the *Qur'an* is no exception

to that In fact the scriptures provide both normative as well as contextual answers Normatively speaking the *Qur'an* opposes violence but permits it contextually

When it comes to context we must take socio-political and socio-economic conditions of the society in which a particular religion originates Hinduism is a non-violent religion in the ideal sense However, in the midst of war, the conditions were different and even Lord Krishna had to urge Arjuna to fight even if it meant shedding the blood of near and dear ones, in fact his own cousins War has justification in certain circumstances, especially if inflicted by exploitative and oppressive forces But war can have no justification for spread of religion Even the concept of *jihad* in Islam has to be seen in this light *Jihad* has nothing to do with the spread of religion, it is only a war against oppression and exploitation

Thus *Qur'an* sanctions war if the weaker sections of society are being persecuted and there is no way left to rescue them Thus the *Qur'an* says "And what reason have you not to fight in the way of Allah, and of the weak among the men and the women and the children, who say Our Lord, take us out of this town, whose people are oppressors, and grant us from Thee a friend, and grant us from Thee a helper'" (4 75)

It can thus be clearly seen that the *Qur'an* urges upon believers to fight against oppression being perpetrated against men, women and children, who are weak (*mustad ifin*) Commencing on this verse, Maulana Muhammad Ali says, "This verse explains what is meant by fighting in the way of Allah While most of the believers who had the means had escaped from Makkah, which is here spoken of as the city *whose people are oppressors*, there remained those who were weak and unable to undertake a journey These were still persecuted and oppressed by the Makkans, as is clearly shown by the words of the verse, and not only men, but even women and young children, were persecuted Fighting to deliver them from the persecution

of the oppressors was really fighting in the way of Allah" (*Holy Qur'an, Ibid*)

Thus to fight against persecution is fight in the way of Allah The next verse also makes it clear when it says Those who believe fight in the way of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the way of the devil (*Taghut*) *Taghut* it must be remembered represents the forces of oppression and exploitation Also, it is necessary to wipe out those who in no other way can be persuaded to give up persecution The Quranic doctrine in this respect is that "persecution is worse than slaughter" (2 191) Uninterrupted persecution, therefore, should in no way go unchallenged If allowed to persist, it may lead to much greater slaughter in future The *Qur'an* does not want exploitation and persecution to go on in society It must be nipped in the bud

Also, there are several verses in the *Qur'an*, which talk of fighting and killing unbelievers For example the *Qur'an* says, "Fight those who believe not in Allah, nor in the Last Day, nor forbid that which Allah and His Messenger have forbidden, nor follow the Religion of Truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of their defeat (*wahum saghirun*)"

Here it appears as if the *Qur'an* is declaring general war against all unbelievers until they accept superiority of Islam and agree to pay *jizya* However, it would be gross simplification It is far from *Qur'an's* intention One has to go into the background of this revelation Firstly, these verses relate not to idolators but to what the *Qur'an* refers to as *Ahl-e-Kitab* (people of the book) i e Jews and Christians There was an understanding between the Muslims and the Jews that when attacked by idolators of Mecca, the Jews will fight on the side of the Muslims However, the Jews had never reconciled themselves to the rising power of the Muslims in Medina and repeatedly betrayed them and assisted the idolators of Mecca They were conspiring to uproot Islam from Arabia

The Roman Empire, the great Christian Power at the time, was, on the other hand, trying to mobilize its forces against Islam which it sought to subjugate It was obvious from the Tabuk expedition It was far from *Qur'an*'s intention to either compell the idolators to accept Islam or the Jews and the Christians to be subjugated The Prophet otherwise would not have drawn up a pact on reaching Medina with the Jews, the Christians and the pagans giving them right to follow their religions It was idolators of Mecca and Jews who repeatedly sought to vanquish Islam with the power of sword The *Qur'an* sanctions violence to counter violence If one studies the history of Arab tribes before Islam and the fierce fighting they indulged in would be convinced that the philosophy of passive resistance would not have worked in that environment A concept emerges in a particular context and works only in that context Non-violence, a concept of great value undoubtedly, and also upheld by Islam as the ultimate norm, could not have worked in the conditions prevailing in Arabia then Moreover, in the verse quoted above, the idea is not to kill unbelievers if they do not accept Islam but to bring them under control by making them accept defeat and pay *jizya*

Also, Islam does not permit Muslims to take up sword against those unarmed It permits to fight against aggressors It is obvious from the Quranic verse, "Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you but be not aggressive Surely Allah loves not the aggressors" (2 190) Thus it is absolutely clear from this verse that the *Qur'an* does not approve of war of aggression and Allah loves not aggressors The following verse also makes this point when it says, "And kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from where they drove you out, and persecution is worse than slaughter And fight not with them at the Sacred Mosque until they fight with you in it, so if they fight you (in it), slay them Such is the recompense of the disbelievers" (2 191) In this verse too fighting has been permitted in retaliation only

Also, if the leaders of disbelievers break their pledge, the *Qur'an* permits Muslims to fight them "And if they break their oaths", the *Qur'an* declares, "after their agreement and revile your religion, then fight the leaders of disbelief — surely their oaths are nothing — so that they may desist" (9 12) Here permission is given to fight the leaders of disbelief if they break oath and if they revile Islam Muslims have already been told by the *Qur'an* not to revile other religions Thus Muslims also do not accept their religion to be reviled Also permission is given to fight if Muslims are oppressed "Permission (to fight) is given to those on whom war is made, because they are oppressed And surely Allah is Able to assist them" (22 39)

If we scan through the *Hadith* literature it would be seen that this is the earliest permission given to Muslims to fight The words in which permission is granted clearly show that war was made against Muslims and that they were greatly oppressed in Mecca The verse that follows the above verse, "Those who are driven from their homes without a just cause except that they say Our Lord is Allah " (22 40), also clearly indicates that permission to fight was given on account of such persecution of Muslims It was far from being general license to fight It is also interesting to note that in the same verse it is made clear that it is not Allah's desire that any house of worship, whatever religious denomination it belongs, to be demolished Allah replaces those who demolish any house of worship by others who would protect them

The *Qur'an* says, "And if Allah did not repel some people by others, cloisters, and churches, and synagogues, and mosques in which Allah's name is much remembered, would have been pulled down," (22 40) Thus from this verse it is clear that all places of worship, churches, synagogues and mosques are to be protected by Muslims as in all these places Allah's name is remembered In India the great sufi saints extended this to Hindu temples also Thus it would be against the will of Allah to demolish any such places of worship

There are some more verses which are often quoted to prove that the *Qur'an* requires either Islam be accepted or they be put to the sword The verse often quoted is as follows "So when the sacred months have passed, slay the idolators, wherever you find them, and take them captive and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush But if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, leave their way free Surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful" (9 5) This verse does not refer to any unbeliever but to those who had missed no opportunity to harass and persecute Muslims, not only that they had broken their agreement with Muslims This verse does not refer to killing individual disbelievers as it refers to ambush, taking captives, besieging and laying in wait which clearly indicate state of war And war is permitted, as pointed out above, only if disbelievers persecute, commit aggression or break their agreement, not otherwise Such disbelievers, if caught in the war, must be made to pray and pay the poor-tax with sincere change of heart

That the intention of the verse is not to kill for refusal to accept Islam is clear from the verse next to above verse It says, "And if anyone of the idolators seek thy protection, protect him till he hears the word of Allah, then convey him to his place of safety This is because they are a people who know not" (9 6) This verse hardly needs any comment Any disbeliever who seeks refuge, give him refuge and take him to the place of safety There is no injunction to compel him to embrace Islam Only he may hear the word of Allah If he decides to accept the word fine but that cannot be a condition to give him refuge and take him to the place of safety

The *Qur'an* also requires that those disbelievers and polytheists who fulfil their part of agreement, Muslims should also honour theirs and should not treat them as enemies Thus the *Qur'an* declares, "Except those of the idolators with whom you made an agreement, then they have not failed you in anything and have not backed up

any one against you, so fulfil their agreement to the end of their term Surely Allah loves those who keep their duty" (9 4) This verse is also a clear proof, if any proof is needed, that the *Qur'an* does not require every idolators to be killed if they do not embrace Islam If they fulfil their part of agreement it is the duty of the Muslims to fulfil their part of agreement till the end of the term

The jurists and the Ulama have divided, in view of such Quranic verses, the idolators into two categories *harbi* and *ghayr-harbi* i e war mongering and non-war mongering idolators While the former should be treated as enemies and fought, the latter should be treated as allies and friends and Muslims should live in peace with them During the freedom struggle the leaders of *jami 'at al-'ulama* (an organization of Muslim theologians) decided to treat the Indian National Congress as their ally in view of such verses of the holy *Qur'an* They opined that the Indian National Congress has given them assurance that the Muslims will be free to follow their religion in India and would be fully protected and hence Hindus are our allies as long as they fulfil their part of agreement India would remain for Muslims *dar al-aman* (abode of peace) These 'Ulama enjoined upon Muslims to wage struggle against the Britishers along with their Hindu brethren to make India free and *dar al-aman*

The concept of *jihad* in Islam has been generally misunderstood Muslims too are responsible for this minsunderstanding They have often justified wars of aggression by Muslim rulers — often power seekers — as constituting *jihad* Nothing could be farther from Islamic teachings The *Qur an* permits war against oppression, to defend the oppressed and the exploited Only such wars could constitute *jihad* It should also be remembered that Islam, besides being a religion, was also a revolutionary movement of its time It sought to change not only religious beliefs but also social structure aspiring to build up a just society favouring the oppressed and weaker sections Allah

Himself declares in the *Qur'an*, "And we desired to bestow a favour upon those who were deemed weak in the land, and to make them the leaders, and to make them the heirs"(28 5)

The *Qur'an* initiated what can be termed as the biggest project for social justice ever attempted until then Since such attempt would harm the vested interests, violence was unavoidable No society can ever be restructured in favour of the oppressed without shedding a drop of blood Vested interests would never allow it to happen, whatever the intentions of revolutionaries The Prophet entered into agreements with idolators too, to avoid bloodshed but the vested interests, fearing the consequences, did not allow it to happen Thus wars became inevitable Bloodshed could not be avoided Peace is very central to Islam but peace is not possible without justice and justice cannot be established peacefully even in a modern democratic society All attempts for justice with peace are derailed by vested interests who can easily manipulate democracy

Four key concepts advocated by the *Qur'an* are *'adl, ihsan, rahmah* and *hikmah* i e justice, benevolence, compassion and wisdom None of these concepts by itself would promote violence The very spirit of these key concepts would be injured by violence Yet the vested interests would see to it that none of these concepts is established in the society Islam in fact did not seek to fight peaceful idolators, much less seeking their forceful conversion, it in fact sought to fight the idols of greed, desire and interests to establish a society based on unity and equality of all human beings Could violence be avoided?

8

Olaf Caroe, the Khan Brothers and the Transfer of Power in the North-West Frontier Province, 1945-1947: An Interpretation

Parshotam Mehra

In its long and chequered annals, India's North-West Frontier has known little if any peace, nor has the story been different under the Raj or the 45 odd years since the birth of Pakistan And especially in the last decade or so which has been witness to the inevitable if remorseless spill-over into the Frontier of a seemingly interminable civil war in Afghanistan spawned, to start with at any rate, by political instability at Kabul and the vaulting ambitions of the two super powers

Nor for the record was the situation any the less explosive on the eve of the transfer of power and the birth of Pakistan In the crush of events spanning those momentous years, a few of the more relevant strands may be briefly interwoven as a backdrop to a more detailed presentation At the outset, there was, early in 1947, an official Kabul claim that the Frontier, which allegedly had nothing to do with India, should be given every opportunity to establish its independence and, if it so chose, to join Afghanistan Jawaharlal Nehru had in 1946 written to Badshah Khan about

Kabul's loud campaign in the media for the 'separation' of the Frontier Province from India 'with a view no doubt about its incorporation' into Afghanistan And he warned that Abdul Ghaffar Khan's views had been 'partly supported and partly distorted' so that the Afghan case be put forward For its part, New Delhi stoutly repudiated Kabul's claims as tantamount to interference in its domestic affairs

Exactly two years earlier, in March 1945, there was he installation into office of a Congress (read Khudai Khidmatgar) ministry in Peshawar headed by the oldr of the two Khan brothers, the redoubtable Dr Khan ahib Way back in 1939, he had been thrown into the plitical wilderness by the inept policies of the Congress Pa·y and its central leadership to whom the two-some swore olitical allegiance In 1939, as now in 1945, Dr Khan Shib had an excellent personal rapport with the provincial governor, Sir George Cunningham

In the cold weather of 1945-46, it may be re lled, there had been a massive general election all over ritish India And in the face of a virulent, no-holds-barrd campaign by his political rivals in the Muslim Leage, Dr Khan Sahib's popular mandate had been overwhelmingly, indeed convincingly, demonstrated *

Literally though on its morrow, the Khan troubles began For, as of March 1946, a new governor i the person of Sir Olaf Caroe took over at Peshawar member of the I C S with long and wide-ranging exprience as frontier administrator, Caroe was strikingly ifferent from his predecessor Sir George, cool and co cted and at home both with men and things, Sir Olaf, arp and intelligent yet high-strung and edgy, singularly at-ease with all those he had to deal with To no one's urprise then, in the months ahead, the new Govern found himself on a collision course with his Premie And not his Premier alone

* Under the Government of India Ac 35 the term 'Premier /'Prime Minister' was used for the provi al Chief Minister

As the shadows lengthened over the Raj's final days, the pace of political developments in the country became hectic, well-nigh breathless Briefly, and in our limited provincial context, a few of the more relevant facets may be highlighted The Cabinet Mission Plan of May 1946 for the devolution of political power to Indian hands led to acute differences between the Congress and the Muslim League With Governor-General Wavell's invitation to the former to cobble together an interim government at the centre (July), making matters worse Determined to stay out in the cold, for the time being at any rate, the League's response to the Viceroy's initiative was a call for 'Direct Action Day' (16 August) whose observance, on conservative estimates, claimed a toll of 5,000 dead on the blood-spattered streets of Calcutta The gory spectacle of death which in the following twelve months was to leave few areas unscathed through the length and breadth of the subcontinent was now a grim reality It was against this grisly background that Jawaharlal Nehru was sworn into office as of 2 September 1946

As Vice-President of the Governor-General's Executive Council and Member for External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, Nehru's portfolio *included* tribal affairs The latter locally, and as an additional charge, were handled by the Governor of the NWFP in his capacity as Agent to the Governor-General (AGG) If only Sir Olaf and those of his persuasion had had their way, the new Member would have been denied this charge They did not, in the event, Nehru came into official contact with Sir Olaf Caroe

Hypercritical of governmental policy and with his own long-nurtured albeit theoretical formulations about how tribal affairs need to be handled, Nehru almost from day one pulled in a diametrically opposite direction To that of his hard-boiled if crusty civil servant who had long known and dealt with the tribes on the ground Nehru's visit to the tribal areas in October 1946 in the wake of some aerial bombing (August-September) there and in the face of Caroe's

explicit advice to the contrary was to prove a disastrous start With the new Member exposed to hostile demonstrations and what proved to be an almost fatal assault These, Nehru and his supporters suspected, were master-minded by the political agents at the Governor's behest In sum, Caroe and his new official boss in New Delhi, with strikingly different perceptions and a mounting clash of wills, were soon set on a collision course

Not unexpectedly this cast fearsome, if ominous, shadows over provincial politics which lengthened with every passing day Worsening an already none-too-happy relationship between the Governor and his council of ministers The final act of the drama spans the period March-July 1947 and the principal dramatis personae include, apart from Olaf Caroe, Dr Khan Sahib, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Nehru, Mountbatten and the rag-tag leadership of the Frontier Muslim League

Briefly, even before the new Governor-General arrived, end March 1947, Nehru had demanded the resignation of Sir Olaf A demand strongly backed by Dr Khan Sahib and his younger brother And even the Mahatma So powerful was the miasma of suspicion and distrust which mired Caroe's image for his alleged sins of omission and commission Not unexpectedly, the Governor had an excellent prop in Jinnah and his Muslim League who, even as Sir Olaf himself, now pleaded strongly for a dissolution of the provincial assembly and holding of fresh elections To test the political waters and what was perceived to be a complete erosion of popular support of the Khan Sahib ministry

It may be recalled that in his fortnightly letter of 7 April 1947 to the Governor-General, Caroe had enclosed a comprehensive note drawn up by his Chief Secretary Mitchell on the situation in the province His policy, Caroe wrote years later, was 'to work up to a vote — either an election or a plebiscite — to make certain whether the Pathans really wanted to follow Congress now that the chips

were down' Mitchell's note, he had hoped, would help the new Viceroy grasp the necessity of this, 'as indeed, I think, it did'

Caroe's proposed course of action did not elicit an immediate response After an initial endoresement, Mountbatten appeared to be opposed, as was Nehru and his Congress party Albeit for diametrically different reasons To sort out what Ismay, Mountabtten's Chief of Staff, was to call this 'bastard situation' — of fitting a predominantly Muslim, yet Congress-ruled, NWFP into the larger whole of Muslim League dominated West Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan which had by early July taken shape and form — it was decided to hold a referendum in the province This had only grudging Congress support in New Delhi and outright opposition from Dr Khan Sahib, Badshah Khan and the entire Khudai Khidmatgar political outfit His bona-fides increasingly suspect with the Congress and his own ministers, Olaf Caroe was eased out of office (June 1947) and General Rob Lockhart took over as his temporary replacement, to organize the referendum

In the July (1947) referendum, Pathans had a Hobson's choice between joining an existing New Delhi-based and, by definition, Hindu-dominated Constituent Assembly and another yet to be convened in the impending Pakistan's new capital, Karachi In this patently 'No Win' situation, Dr Khan Sahib and his political mentor, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, had demanded a third choice — an independent Pathanistan Refused, they opted for a boycott of the referendum

Excpectedly, the voters' choice went overwhelmingly in favour of Jinnah's Pakistan Sir Olaf who had proforma proceeded on leave in the hope that Pakistan's new rulers will opt for him as their choice of the Frontier's new governor was sorely disappointed when on 4 July, and behind his back, Jinnah finally revealed his hand And asked for George Cunningham, who it may be noted, was, initially at any rate, none too keen to return The Pathans and their

Badshah Khan were an unhappy lot for Congress and its central leadership had at a critical juncture abandoned them to the tender mercies of their political adversaries, the Frontier Muslim League Dr Khan Sahib was dismissed within a week of the birth of Pakistan, in the event, on the morrow of the transfer of power by the Raj, the NWFP and its people became an integral part of the state of Pakistan

II

A few tentative conclusions on men and events may be briefly summed up As the narrative unfolds, Sir Olaf doubtless emerges as the principal actor for his role in the chain of developments that led to the transfer of power in the NWFP Supporting roles are played by the Khan Brothers, especially the elder, Dr Khan Sahib as well as Nehru and Mountbatten At a farther remove are the Muslim League and its cohorts with their solid base in the predominantly non-Pakhtun Hazara district They queered the pitch for the Congress and its ministry — allegedly in an unholy collusion with Sir Olaf Sir George Cunningham whom Caroe succeeded as the provincial Governor and who, in turn, succeeded him — barring a few weeks' interregnum under General Rob Lockhart — had only a peripheral, though by no means unimportant role to play

To start with, in opposing Nehru's 'ill-starred visit' (Caroe's words) to the tribal areas in October 1946, was Sir Olaf acting under extraneous pressures? And in so far as Nehru had refused to listen to his advice, vowed to make things a little less than easy for the new Member of the Governor-General's Council? Or, did he, as an honest civil servant, sound a timely warning to his political superior who for his own good reasons was constrained not to heed it In retrospect, Caroe was to view Nehru's foray as the 'most important event — fatal to the Congress and to the unity of India ' Insisting that 'nothing falls into place lacking an appreciation of that event '

Some of the questions the visit raised are singularly pertinent Was Caroe not directly or indirectly responsible for permission to the fire-eating Muslim League propagandist, the Pir of Manki, to tour the tribal areas a week or so ahead of Nehru's visit? Or, for the behaviour of the Political Agents in the tribal agencies which had left a lot to be desired? And especially of Mahbub Ali Khan, incharge of the Malakand Agency, whose gross neglect of an elementary duty to escort his visitors through his territorial beat culminated in physical assaults on Nehru and the Khan Brothers that may well have proved fatal Caroe's explanation that Nehru's one-sided views had to be countered by the Pir of Manki's does not really wash, he could no doubt have anticipated the latter's hostile propaganda and the resultant whirlwind Nehru had to reap As for the Political Agents, they may well have taken their cue from the known stance of their chief at Peshawar Nor does Mahbub Ali's later exoneration take away the gravamen of the charge against him dereliction of duty at its worst

While one need not go into the details of Mahbub Ali's less than honourable conduct, a few points need attention To begin with, Curtis, the Deputy Commissioner of Mardan who encountered Nehru's party almost immediately after the incident noted that three windows of his car had been broken and there was a cut on Nehru's chin, that Khan Sahib's clothes were stained with blood and Abdul Ghaffar Khan had a cut on the nose Again, Wavell who visited the scene a couple of weeks later recorded in his *Journal* that 'it was inexcusable' that Mahbub Ali should have gone on down the hill — 'and not seen the party safely past what was obviously a danger point And finally, Nehru's characteristically magnanimous view that he was 'not prepared to accuse any officers (excepting one)' whose conduct during his tour he rated 'thoroughly discreditable' But for Mahbub Ali Khan, Nehru had no desire that 'any particular individual should be held responsible' for any

incident And denied having levelled any 'general charges' against the officers of the Indian Political Service, he thought it wrong in principle 'because this loses substance by joining together the good and the bad '

Another facet of Caroe's tenure — and this long before Nehru appeared on the scene — was his singularly unhappy relationship with the provincial Premier whom he accused of interference in judicial processes and wrong-headed administrative policies A bad beginning that worsened with every passing day Here too Wavell's comments on his return from a tour of the Frontier (November 1946) are relevant Caroe, he recorded, 'is very much on edge' and, a little later, he is 'highly strung and takes things too hardly and seriously ' More, he and Khan Sahib were 'essentially different types who are not likely to get on well together '

As between the twosome further complications arose from the Governor's unsolicited advice to his Premier that, to tide over a deteriorating law and order situation in the province where the Muslim League was on the war-path, Dr Khan Sahib loosen his Congress apron-strings, get rid of his solitary Hindu minister and induct members of the Muslim League into his Council of Ministers (February-March 1947) Unable to bring the Khan around, the Governor swung to the other extreme of recommending the dismissal of his ministry followed by a spell of Governor's rule and holding of fresh elections His reasoning the party in power had forfeited its popular mandate Nothing suited the Muslim League better and, by definition, was greater anathema to the Congress Again, what better proof that the Governor was colluding with the League and sabotaging the Congress ministry? No wonder Dr Khan Sahib told the visiting Governor-General (April 1947) that the real leader of the Muslim League in the province was not Jinnah but 'His Excellency the Governor' who had, in addition, stage-managed a massive demonstration in Peshawar both to impress his visitor as well as browbeat his ministers

Caroe's alleged partisanship and his bitter, even hostile, references to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Nehru and other Congress leaders in his private papers and official reports need not detain us long Nor the support he covertly, and his officials overtly, gave to the provincial Muslim League It is necessary to underline here that anyone else in Caroe's position may not have behaved differently For as his relations with his political boss deteriorated in the aftermath of the latter's visit (October 1946), Weightman, Nehru's British Foreign Secretary in the Department of External Affairs, noted (6 November) that Congress 'are "gunning for" for Olaf Caroe and will have him out if they can ' In the event, the combined assault of the Khudai Khidmatgars and the provincial ministry nearer home as well as Nehru and the top Congress hierarchy outside meant — as Caroe must have viewed it — the blighting of his otherwise brilliant service career Not yet 55, the unmistakable demand now was for his head — on a platter as it were Badly beleaguered and exposed to strains of an unprecedented character, it is not unlikely that Caroe may have wittingly, or unwittingly, leaned over to the other side

In parenthesis, it may be of interest to note that on return home (August 1947), Sir Olaf sounded out the Foreign Office if he could be useful but 'received no encouragement whatever ' Again, the usual privilege of an interview with the King 'was not accorded, at least to myself ' In short, he ruefully concluded, 'all my efforts to secure employment failed '

A grouse Caroe long nursed was that a clear understanding that he would go back to Peshawar — if the Congress lost the referendum — was not honoured That, he, in fact, was victim of 'sharp practice' and received 'unworthy treatment' The accusation is hard to refute and archival records would suggest that it was the India Office in London who had insisted that Caroe was *not* to go back to Peshawar while the Raj lasted For Caroe to resume, Whitehall had argued, 'would be taken as implying that

we ourselves believe that Caroe is in favour of the Muslim League and therefore ought not to be in office ' Should Pakistan, however, as a Dominion Government, advise the King that Caroe 'resume or be reappointed' the situation would be different In the event, Jinnah did not, leaving Mountbatten little choice — presuming that the latter wanted to honour his commitment

A logical outcome of Sir Olaf's alleged solicitude for the Muslim League would have been his restoration at Peshawar on the eve if not the morrow of transfer of power Somehow this happy ending to an otherwise stormy interlude never came to pass for Jinnah asked for the re-induction of George Cunningham, *not* the re-installation of Olaf Caroe Friends like Iskander Mirza felt that the Muslim League was 'honour bound' to put Caroe in the saddle, thereby bestowing 'a well-deserved reward' for services rendered 'No other reason but health', Mirza noted years later, 'was given to sabotage you' and even though he (Mirza) had pleaded with Liaquat Ali Khan, 'I was helpless ' It may be of interest to recall that Caroe's health, especially the mental strains to which he was exposed were so obvious to every visitor to Government House in Peshawar — Wavell, Ismay, Mountbatten — and find frequent mention in a number of official communications And for the record, Mirza noted that 'even before you went to Kashmir (June 1947) stories were going round that you had a nervous breakdown and required rest '

Caroe has maintained that Pakhtunistan was not 'really a new Congress policy evolved during the Viceroy's visit (April 1947), to Peshawar Nor did Khan Sahib's government 'ever contemplate' a Pakhtunistan 'embracing the Pathans of Afghanistan ' His 'own belief' was that 'betrayed' by Nehru's agreement to a vote being taken, the Khan Brothers 'fell back on a fanciful support for some sort of Pathan independence' as a reason for boycotting the referendum As for himself, he had 'pressed for' a fresh election 'the idea of referendum was hatched in New Delhi and was

not mine' (emphasis added) He never discovered whose it was 'the probability is that it was easier to obtain Nehru's agreement to a referendum than to an election, when my provincial government still had a majority in the legislature '

In a long personal note ('From 1947 On') written years after the heat and dust had settled down, Caroe heavily underlined the point that it was his handling of tribal affairs during 1946-47 that ensured a peaceful transition for 'if there had been tribal disorder', the transfer of power may have 'proved impossible ' Again, but for the test of opinion in the referendum there may have been '(a) civil war in the Province, (b) tribal invasions as in 1930, (c) probably an Afghan invasion, (d) a failure to carry through the transfer of power in 1947, and possibly even in 1948 or later '

In his defence, Caroe put forth the plea 'that had he really been partisan', Dr Khan Sahib and Iskander Mirza would not have arranged his visit to the Frontier as a state guest (1956), Abdul Ghaffar Khan would not have stayed with him at his Sussex home (1964), nor Wali Khan blossomed into 'my closest Pathan friend ' In 1956, it may be noted, Dr Khan Sahib was Chief Minister of the one-unit West Pakistan, Iskander Mirza, Pakistan's Governor-General, Olaf Caroe researching for his definitive study, *The Pathans* (1973) Eight years later, Badshah Khan had sojourned to England (1964) to recoup after one of his prolonged jail terms

Mountbatten, according to Caroe, thought the latter was holding the 'most difficult post in India' and absolved him 'altogether of partisanship' More, he 'disbelieved entirely' the accusation that Caroe was a 'League propagandist' So does the Swedish scholar Jansson who is convinced that Caroe's views and aims 'were basically the contrary to what he has been accused of he was not in favour of Pakistan, he was opposed to partition he preferred the Khan brothers to the Muslim League leaders'

In 1946, Caroe had not only bemoaned the passing away of tribal affairs and therefore vital problems of the Frontier

to Congress (read Hindu) control but felt that the handing over of the defence portfolio to a non-Muslim had compounded the initial error In retrospect, it may seem a curious way of looking at things though by no means untypical of the thinking of top British bureaucrats on the eve of transfer of power It tied up with another fond hope Caroe and his friends entertained namely that Whitehall would have a role to play in the future political set up of the Frontier in general and its tribal areas in particular That events outpaced him was neither his fault nor yet his failing For Olaf Caroe's tragedy was not that of an individual, a whole system, an entire structure, had given way And, for the record, in the Frontier at any rate, yielded place to another which, barring the officials at the top, differed *in no material way from the one in which men* like Caroe had felt so much at home!

Dr Khan Sahib's role during this entire run of two years though seemingly pivotal remains somewhat shadowy Few, including Olaf Caroe, questioned his outstanding human qualities his fresh, boyish charm, his fearless manly courage, his professed steadfast adherence to political loyalties and affiliations What has been held against him was his alleged lack of administrative capacity, a singular absence, as Wavell put it, of the 'necessary force of character or wisdom to run a province' On his interview with Dr Khan Sahib (14 November), the Viceroy noted that the Premier's 'whole theme was that the Governor and the British officials were not supporting him and the government' His accusations though, Wavell recorded, 'were completely vague, he did not name anyone' Mountbatten too referred to Dr Khan Sahib's incessant complaints against his officials, so, earlier on, had George Cunningham In viewing all this in retrospect it is necessary to recall that Congress ministers — and not in the Frontier alone — were anathema to the top echelons of the Raj's bureaucracy Again, under the Government of India Act, 1935, the public services were the special responsibility of the Governor And with Sir

Olaf at the helm of affairs they could have been anything but friendly to the Congress ministers, much less co-operated with them

Another facet of Dr Khan Sahib's place in the scheme of things is to recall that in sharp contrast to his younger brother he does not appear to have played any significant role in the Khudai Khidmatgar movement It is doubtful if, outside legislative politics, he had much of a rapport with the masses Cunningham alludes to his proforma allegiance to the Red Shirts and a secret Pakistani document in the 1950s would appear to suggest that his political clout such as it was derived exclusively from Badshah Khan 'if the two brothers stay together, they will have a united strength If they are separated, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan will retain his position, whereas Dr Khan Sahib will pass into eclipse because individually he has no position '

Dr Khan Sahib's later career would suggest a propensity to wheeling-dealing at the cost of political principles and life-long political loyalties (did Caroe, in 1947, perhaps have an inkling?) Thus as early as October 1954, Dr Khan Sahib had mended his fences with Pakistan's rulers to emerge as a minister in Chaudhari Mohammed Ali's cabinet Later, in close liaison with Iskander Mirza who was to take over as Governor-General, Dr Khan Sahib lent his support to the one-unit West Pakistan scheme under which he was to be its Chief Minister for a little over two years (April 1955-July 1957) And launched his short-lived Republican Party For the record, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and people of his persuasion were vehemently opposed to the new political configuration as being grossly unfair to the Frontier For his pains, Badshah Khan was prosecuted and placed behind bars by Dr Khan Sahib's government!

Abdul Ghaffar Khan's part in this brief interregnum though indirect was by no means unimportant Then, as later in life, Badshah Khan did not measure up to the stereotype of a politician For, not unlike the Mahatma— and the sobriquet of Frontier Gandhi was neither ill-deserved nor

yet inappropriate — his politics were suffused with a singularly unalloyed dedication to the cause of honesty and truth as he perceived them All through life, he remained powerfully convinced that the real solution to the Frontier's problems lay not in ganging up with the rag-tag of time-servers who constituted the provincial Muslim League — a course of action Jinnah had strongly urged on him both prior to and, even more forcefully, after Pakistan's birth — but in standing up for the rights of the Pakhtuns to carve out their independent identity By no means outside the territorial domain of Pakistan

It is interesting to recall that Badshah Khan's assessment of Caroe's role in subverting the authority of the provincial government was no whit different from that of Dr Khan Sahib or Nehru's for that matter To whose loud protests he added his own powerful voice, for the Governor's recall

Later, it was Abdul Ghaffar Khan who forcefully pleaded that Pakhtunistan offered an ideal solution to the problems of the Frontier Sadly, in the frenetic activity and the breathless pace of events in the few months preceding the Partition, the concept came with a certain unseemly haste and, to start with at any rate, was vaguely defined Understandbly, this lack of clarity was seized upon by its detractors who charged that it implied an indirect if devious way of demanding accession to India Here it is necessary to underline that Badshah Khan refused to kowtow to the compulsions which Nehru faced vis-a-vis the holding of a referendum and despite the latter's forceful advocacy that he should take part in it, opted for a boycott Any participation, Badshah Khan ruled, would be tantamount to a betrayal of all that he and his Khudai Khidmatgars stood for the circumstances and the issues were 'essentially communal in their nature' The irony, he pointed out, was the greater in that long dubbed Hindus and Hindu agents 'now when we have refused to join Hindustan, we are forced to fight the referendum on the issue of Pakistan versus Hindustan'

A recent analysis underscores the point that Nehru's views based on Mountbatten's advice to take part in the referendum would have led to the 'political isolation and virtual liquidation' of the Khudai Khidmatgars among the Pathans. Sensing this fatal conspiracy against them, Badshah Khan 'refused to swallow the bait.'

Those who have accused Abdul Ghaffar Khan of betraying Pakistan's interests or being less than loyal to the new nation do him grave injustice and are, in fact, grossly unfair. His movement, they charged, was secessionist and would lead to Pakistan's dismemberment. The harsh truth is that Badshah Khan's was 'a "modern" nationalist movement' with its own ideology and a reform programme for the Pakhtun people. Clearly distinct from the Pakhtun movement in the tribal areas which was 'only a matter of the same traditional tribal divisions and groupings as before and the same old political horse trading.' Badshah Khan's Pakhtunistan, it should be obvious, did *not* constitute a threat to the integrity of Pakistan for there were in it no extraterritorial loyalties. It received significance only because it was exploited by others.

It is interesting to recall an entry in Cunningham's diary inscribed shortly after his meeting (15 February 1939) with Abdul Ghaffar Khan (who had for the first time since 1931 met a British official). 'My rough impression ... on this short acquaintance, is that his chief object is generally the social and economic improvement of the Pathan, that he is not bitter against the individual British officer, though he dislikes our system of government — not unlike the South Irish.'

The tragedy of Abdul Ghaffar Khan's life, and Caroe's brief span of 15 odd months marks a watershed of sorts in his long and eventful span of almost a century, lay in that he was far ahead of his times. The British had no use for him — in the privacy of his confidential reports, Caroe referred to him as 'that idiot Abdul Ghaffar Khan' — nor did Jinnah and his successors. No wonder for long spells — longer than of his Raj gaolers — they kept him behind

bars without even the fig leaf of a trial And on the morrow of its birth, the new state banned the Khudai Khidmatgar movement and hounded its individual members in a shameless vendetta that knows few parallels in political persecution The end-result was there for all to see — an alienated Frontier whose proud Pathans have added their mite to Pakistan's myriad other problems If only the 'idiot' has been respected, understood, and listened to!

Nehru's multifaceted personality with all its charm and vitality suffered from some grievous flaws One such was his emotional attachment to men and situations which defied all cool-headed, rational analyses A case in point was the hangover of decades of empty rhetoric fed on imaginary scenarios about the tribes of the NWFP They conjured up a romantic picture of brave men whom the Raj had grievously wronged And who were only too keen to hug and embrace its political legatees No wonder on the morrow of his assumption of office and against the better judgment of his colleagues — including Azad, the Sardar and the Mahatma — and in the face of the not-so-dishonest advice of the local functionary, Nehru launched on his luckless tour

In extenuation though it is only fair to underline that the bombing of the tribal area (of the Shabikhel in Waziristan) — in retaliation for the abduction of the Political Agent and his party (June 1946) — almost synchronized with the swearing in of Nehru's government His detractors in general, and the Muslim League in particular, blamed him squarely for this barbaric act — of aerial bombardment The first news, it would appear was relayed to him by Badshah Khan who as well as Nehru's officials in New Delhi now suggested that he could undertake a tour of the tribal areas to familiarize himself with the ground realities and judge things for himself It is hard to imagine anyone in similar circumstances reacting differently

Sadly for him, his hopes — that the tribes enthused by the threshold of independence to which he beckoned were

but waiting for his words of wisdom — were rudely belied Preceding his visit, the young Pir of Manki had no doubt sown the wind and raised the ante but clearly his beat was limited to the Afridi strongholds in the Peshawar area while hostility to Nehru appeared fairly widespread Nor was Sir Olaf exactly friendly All in all, it was clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that the tribes did not respond to the pep talk Nehru and the Khan Brothers gave them To be fair to them, the Raj's political intrigues and manoeuvrings apart, the tribes were less than sure of Nehru's own bonafides Nor did the fact that he was a non-Muslim go well with them All told, a bad situation had been made worse — for him as no doubt for the already beleaguered Dr Khan Sahib and his ministerial colleagues Nor was there to be any retrieval in the months to come Nehru's first visit to the Frontier, after assumption of office, was to prove his last

His strong advocacy of the Frontier Congress taking part in the referendum needs a word by way of explanation The boycott, Nehru was convinced, was 'not an easy weapon' in regard to a referendum because 'to fight democratically and be defeated' did not weaken a movement for long But 'to give up without a struggle' means a 'certain lack of integrity through fear of consequences ' On the more pragmatic level, since the Congress had committed itself to the 'fullest freedom and help' to the Frontier people — a vote for India 'would mean a vote for self-determination and freedom, it would recognise the urge for Pathanistan and yet afford an opportunity to participate in the referendum ' Besides, there was a good prospect of winning — Mountbatten and Caroe had rated the chances to be 50 50, Dr Khan Sahib, we are told, was convinced of carrying the day But even if we lost by a small margin, Nehru argued, 'we would have struck a big blow at Pakistan ' Sadly, in the Frontier at any rate, there were few takers for this line of reasoning And outside, even the

Mahatma was not convinced He posed Nehru the all-important question 'Would it be wrong if you (Nehru) insisted that referendum would be wrong without the presentation of the picture of Pakistan?' Gandhi's plaintive cry appears to have elicited no response[1]

Mountbatten's part in the Frontier drama is at best peripheral His was a difficult, seemingly impossible task — to reconcile diametrically opposite positions Caroe was not far wrong in suggesting that his ministry's popular base had fast eroded It indeed had But its dismissal, imposition of Section 93 rule and holding of fresh elections did not offer the panacea the Governor visualised Nor was the proposed course of action without grave risks to the peace of the province The compromise finally wrought — like all compromises — was far from satisfactory But given a situation where all initiative was fast slipping away, the referendum was perhaps the only way out Put differently, Mountbatten accepted the core of Caroe's policy — of testing the political waters afresh — and made the Congress toe his line, by getting rid of Caroe

A measure of the Governor-General's success may be gauged from the fact that his approach to the Frontier won the complete confidence of Nehru who in his 'Note on the Situation in the NWFP' (8 June 1947) talked unabashedly of the Viceroy's 'sincerity and bonafides and his desire to do the right thing' and 'go ahead in the right direction ' In striking contrast though was Badshah Khan who hated John Bull for his diabolic designs against his people and told the Viceroy as much in an interview (May 1947) 'How to trust you when I see your crooked dealings in the Frontier Province?'

It should also perhaps bear mention that the third choice demanded did not offer a viable alternative Jinnah's refusal to reopen the question apart, it would have opened up a Pandora's box — in Bengal no less than in Assam Clearly, Nehru and his colleagues could not have it both ways — eat their cake and have it too The Khan Brothers' later charge that the Congress threw them to the wolves was

perfectly legitimate, valid Sadly, for the party leadership, in the political configuration of June-July 1947, there was hardly any choice Or, was there?

III

A word on the *Frontier* Muslim League The Muslim League ministry of Aurangzeb Khan (1943-45) was notorious for its corruption and lost much Muslim support by the way it handled commodity scarcities and rising prices, both endemic in the closing years of World War II A ramshackle minority government sustained in office by its unethical detention of ten Congress MLAs, Aurangzeb Khan had to placate the 'haves' — the more influential and powerful among the Khans all too eager to recover from the losses sustained during the earlier Congress period of rule (1937-39) The League's factional feuds however were so deep-rooted that a rival 'Progressive Muslim League' had emerged in Peshawar It may be recalled that George Cunningham treated his Muslim League Premier with a measure of disdain if not outright contempt much too evident in the pages of his Diary, Olaf Caroe had referred to the Frontier Muslim League leadership as 'that miserable crew'

In the February 1946 elections, despite Jinnah's clarion call 'Every vote in favour of Muslim League candidates means Pakistan, every vote against the Muslim League means Hindu Raj', the League fared badly And this despite hordes of its student workers from the Punjab and Aligarh who tom-tommed the League slogan Nor was the reason for the electoral debacle far to seek, it lay in the fact that the mass of Pathan voters appeared convinced that the Khudai Khidmatgars were neither anti-Muslim nor yet tools of Hindus No wonder the League's tactics of using *gundi* — factional rivalries — and *pir-muridi*, the guru-disciple ties, yielded little in electoral gains The Congress garnered solid rural support, captured 19 of the 36 seats reserved for the Muslims, thereby exposing the League to be a party of towns and the non-Pathan Hazara district

A Congress victory at the hustings notwithstanding, Cunningham had warned the Viceroy that it 'would be dangerous to deduce' that the Pathans as such 'will be quite happy in a united India without safeguards.'

The Cabinet Mission Plan of 16 May dealt the first major blow to the Frontier Congress. It raised a ticklish question: how was the Frontier to group? With Sind and the neighbouring Punjab? Or, with Madras, Bombay, the C.P. & Berar, Orissa and the U.P.—with their vast Hindu majority? The subsequent failure of the Mission's plan did not camouflage this naked reality nor make it the less uncomfortable for the Congress leadership. While Nehru's ill-timed October (1946) visit brought home ever more vividly the possibility that the Pathans might one day be ruled by a Hindu-dominated centre!

By end-1946, thanks to a rash of communal disorders which broke out in the wake of its parent body's Direct Action Day, the Frontier Muslim League made rapid organizational strides. Its medical aid missions to riot-torn Bihar brought back blood-stained clothing and even the skulls of alleged Muslim victims. The fact that some Pathans among the large numbers resident in Bombay, were caught in the communal cross-fire there in September (1946) was grist to League propaganda. Equally, it made the position of Muslim Congressmen increasingly untenable.

Communal troubles elsewhere in India apart, the League's fortunes brightened with growing religious fanaticism in the Frontier itself. In December 1946, trans-border tribesmen began raiding in Hazara district leading to large-scale Hindu and Sikh exodus to the neighbouring Rawalpindi district of the Punjab.

Early in 1947, the Frontier Muslim League launched its Civil Disobedience campaign in tandem with a similar movement by the party against the Unionist Government in the neighbouring Punjab. The objective was to demonstrate the League's command over the loyalty of Muslims at a time when the Partition was becoming a grim possibility. In the Frontier, it was a generally popular

movement involving not only local officials and party functionaries but ordinary people as well Women and the youth were in the forefront and helped disrupt day-to-day administration in the towns and the countryside leaving isolated clusters of Hindu and Sikh communities at the mercy of fanatical, angry Muslim mobs

March 1947 was witness to mounting civil disorder and communal violence in Hazara and Peshawar, in April, the contagion spread to Dera Ismail Khan where loss of life apart, damage to Hindu and Sikh property was unprecedented The League's blatant use of communal violence to achieve political ends reaped a rich harvest when Mountbatten conceeded its demand and opted for a referendum

All the while, the mounting deterioration in the communal situation throughout India had led to an almost daily exodus of large numbers from the Frontier Congress The renegades swelled League ranks, lent it prestige, pockets of popular support and much-needed organizational skills All this was enough to convince the provincial Governor that the continuation of the Congress ministry posed a major threat to peace in the province And in the tribal areas

The Pakhtunistan demand of the Frontier Congress surfaced so late in the day that the Muslim League succeeded in dismissing it as a mere bargaining counter A clever if confused way of demanding accession to India The Red Shirt plea that it was in a real sense the logical conclusion of their earlier championing of Pathan interests as well as their distinct culture and contained within it the powerful sentiment of the Pathan fear of Punjabi domination in the name of religion, did not register No wonder while some Congress leaders in the province held that they might win a plebiscite on the issue of Pakhtunistan, others thought it unlikely, given the communal polarisation all over the country by the summer of 1947

With the referendum, the Muslim League triumph was complete for while Dr Khan Sahib still remained in office,

the League was now the real master in the province All the same, its rapid rise during 1946-47 'established a dangerous illusion of permanence' As a matter of fact, once the crisis had passed, the League returned to its factional squabbles and particularisms Within a year the rift in its ranks was there for all to see for with the emergence of the Abdul Qaiyum and Pir of Manki factions, the League's influence 'declined as rapidly as it had grown'

Jansson who claims to have gone into party organizational questions 'in some detail' has expressed the view that during this entire period the Frontier Muslim League 'remained in disarray' More, the ultimate victory of Pakistan in the NWFP 'was due to other factors than the work of the provincial Muslim League' Rittenberg who is equally knowledgeable endorses this line of reasoning affirming that 'even at its peak' during these years (1946-47), when the Muslim League 'seemingly unified town and country' against the Hindus and the Congress, its position in the Pakhtun areas remained 'tenuous' And with 'disunity and disarray' its historical norm, the League's 'triumph' in 1947 'occurred in spite of its organizational structure rather than because of it' In the event, once a semblance of normalcy returned, the League melted away and, true to 'traditional patterns', its ascendancy proved to be 'ephemeral'

IV

A few footnotes may be in order Wrested from the Sikhs in 1849, the North-West Frontier continued to be administratively a part of the Punjab until 1901 when the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) embracing the five Settled Districts of Peshawar, Hazara, Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan came into being In 1937, Peshawar was divided into two, Peshawar and Mardan

The tribal areas represented a belt of territory between what was British India and Afghanistan Defined by an international boundary, the 1893 Durand Line, it was a zone of an area under the territorial control of the Government

but where the law and administrative forms, especially the systems of taxation, were not applied New Delhi's general control over the tribes was exercised through subsidies—and, ultimately, the army Put differently, in the conception of India these territories were included, but not in British India It followed that the boundary of British India which was *British* administered, ended where tribal territory began

The External Affairs Department was something distinct from the Political Department and was responsible *inter alia* for foreign affairs and tribal areas The Department was an integral part of the central government under the control of the Governor-General-in-Council The Political Department on the other hand was the secretariat of the Crown Representative and was controlled by the Political Advisor to the Crown Representative, it was *not* under the central government

The only constitutional link between the Political Department and the External Affairs Department was provided by the Viceroy in his dual capacity as Governor-General and Crown Representative The Indian Political Service belonged to a joint cadre which served both the Crown Representative as well as the External Affairs Department All its officers were normally called Political Officers

Drawn from the Indian Civil Service (ICS), about one-third and the Army, about two-third, there was in the Indian Political Service a smattering of the Indian Police (IP) as well While the Political Advisor to the Crown Representative was the senior officer of the service, the Secretary of State for India was ultimately incharge

The relatively prosperous Peshawar area supported nearly 40 per cent of the Frontier's population, Kohat produced little Three-fourths of all Hindu and Sikhs lived in urban centres, they accounted for one-third of the Frontier's town dwellers

A word on the Durand Line and the processes of delineating, delimiting and demarcating a boundary

Describing a boundary in written, verbal terms — as in a document—is to *delineate* it, defining it by a line on a map — with or without verbal description — is to *delimit* it, transferring these definitions physically to an actual line on the ground is to *demarcate* it For the record, the Durand Line (1893) was demarcated, the MacDonald Line (1899) was delineated — not delimited, the McMahon Line (1914) was delimited — not demarcated It should follow that demarcation, as no doubt delimitation of boundaries assumes the concurrence of the concerned sovereign states In the case of the Durand Line, that of Afghanistan and the Raj

V

A brief bibliographical note may not be out of place here To start with, among the *unpublished* sources, of the greatest interest are the papers or Sir Olaf Caroe housed in the *India Office Library and Records (IOL & R)** in London and listed, *Mss Eur C 273* (Caroe Papers) This writer has in his possession some private papers of Sir Olaf including his correspondence with Lady Caroe, Iskander Mirza and Norval Mitchell As well as the entire corpus of Caroe's fortnightly reports to the Governor-General along with the telegraphic exchanges with Mountbatten leading to his resignation There is also an account of his years in retirement, 'From 1947 On' in typed manuscript

Sir George Cunningham's papers as well as his Diary which draws to a close in August 1948 are now part of the *IOL&R* collection, *Mss Eur D 670* (Cunningham Papers) The Diary is extremely revealing both of its author as well as his candid impressions of men and events

In India, the release of *Cabinet Papers 1941-62* available at the National Archives of India (NAI) offers a useful tool *Inter alia* there is a file on the NWFP with a report by

* Now re-christened the *British Library Oriental and India Office Collections*

Brigadier Booth, the Referendum Commissioner, giving details of the July 1947 referendum with sketches of 'an ideal polling booth' and 'instructions to a voter casting votes' Booth notes that 'forty-six individuals were arrested for either taking papers out of polling stations with the intent to sell them, or for impersonation' For a good corrective on the malpractices in the referendum the reader may check with Wali Khan's *Facts are Facts* as well as Jansson's *India, Pakistan or Pakhtunistan,* both listed later in the note

For *official documentation* relating to these years, there is no fuller coverage than in the late Professor Nicholas Mansergh's (Editor-in-Chief) *Constitutional Relations Between Britain and India The Transfer of Power, 1942-47,* (HMSO), 12 vols, vols VIII-XII (1979-83) For supplementing this minehouse of information the reader may look up *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* (New Delhi), Second Series, vols 2-4

Among *secondary sources,* Wali Khan's *Facts Are Facts* (New Delhi, 1987) is important though repetitious and at places contradictory A son of the late Badshah Khan, he was close to the principal dramatis personae and professes to offer 'an honest account' of his father's struggle as well as that of the Red Shirts *Inter alia,* Wali Khan mercilessly lampoons the Muslims League outfit in the NWFP for its 'heinous act' of supporting the 'imperialist, arrogant and above all the infidel British rule while hiding behind the veil of Islam' While his observations as a contemporary witness have a measure of relevance, a modicum of caution is necessary in accepting them at their face value A major disadvantage is the multiple translation the author's original in Pashto was rendered into Urdu and then translated into English! How much of the essence, and nuances, of the original are reflected in the end-product is thus debatable

Norval Mitchell's slim biography, *Sir George Cunningham* (Edinburgh, 1968) rests squarely on his subject's papers and diaries apart from newspaper clippings and other people's memoirs and has been written with great empathy and

understanding Finance Secretary in the Frontier administration under Cunningham and succeeding De La Fargue as Chief Secretary sometime in March 1947, Mitchell had first-hand knowledge and understanding of the period Incidentally Caroe's papers reveal that Cunningham had confided in him (Mitchell) that Mountbatten's conduct, in relation to Caroe, was 'unpardonable' It is also clear that Caroe had scrutinised Mitchell's manuscript before it went to the printers

Three excellent works on the subject which cover a great deal of common ground and rest on meticulous research are Erland Jansson, *India, Pakistan or Pakhtunistan The Nationalist Movements in the North-West Frontier Province, 1937-47* (Uppsala, 1981), Stephen Alan Rittenberg, *The Independence Movements in India's North-West Frontier Province* (Durham, 1988), and Amit Kumar Gupta, *North West Frontier Province Legislature and Freedom Struggle 1932-47* (New Delhi, 1976) While comparisons may be odious, Jansson has an edge over the other two especially in the detailed study he offers for the years with which this presentation is principally concerned His analysis of the growth of the Khudai Khidmatgars and the change that came over the political landscape during 1946-47 makes for useful reading Even though Rittenberg's may appear to be more recent, in actual fact, his 1977 Columbia University thesis long remained in manuscript and was not published until over a decade later, Jansson has, in fact, made critical use of it Compared to him, Rittenberg's canvass is larger for he takes into his beat almost half a century of the Frontier's history, from the very inception of the province (1901) to the transfer of power in 1947 Gupta's great strength lies in his careful use of archival sources available nearer home as well as private papers, periodical literature and newspaper holdings His focus on the provincial legislature — the work is part of a series on the role of the central and state legislatures in India's freedom movement — makes it inevitable that legislative debates and parliamentary proceedings are heavily drawn upon

Ian Talbot's slim volume on *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement* (London, 1988) surveys the growth of the Muslim League in the north-western as well as the north-eastern parts of British India in the crucial decade preceding Pakistan's birth His solitary chapter on 'The Troublesome Frontier' underscores the point that 'without the Frontier, Pakistan would have led a tenuous existence even without the Kashmir dispute' and that the outcome of the referendum 'justified the local (Muslim League) leadership's resort to direct action despite the communal disorders it had brought '

The scope of Ainslie T Embree's (ed) *Pakistan's Western Borderlands* (New Delhi, 1977) goes far beyond our limited purview both in the areas it surveys as its time scale The editor's introductory pages as well as his more detailed 'Pakistan's Imperial Legacy' are useful in the broader context of viewing post-1947 years for 'political arrangements for an unadministered frontier, while suited to the limited social aims of the imperial power were dysfunctional for a national state basing its legitimacy on an identity of territorial integrity and nationality' Rittenberg's piece on 'Continuities in Borderland Politics' draws heavily on his thesis referred to above while Leon B Poullada's 'Pushtunistan Afghan Domestic Politics and Relations with Pakistan' is useful to an understanding of why Muslim League leadership so grossly misunderstood Badshah Khan's advocacy of the Pakhtun cause Poullada heavily underlines the fact that the Raj 'never succeeded in completely pacifying or winning over the loyalty of the Pushtun tribes' and that British influence in Afghanistan remained largely tenuous and perilous' Again, that while Pakistan felt 'concerned' over the centrifugal tendencies inherent in any full-fledged independence movement among its own Pushtuns, for Afghanistan, Pushtunistan 'is a symbol of a glorious past, a pragmatic formula for the political present and a harbinger of a more powerful future '

Of peripheral interest is Charles Chenevix Trench's *Viceroy's Agent* (London, 1987) A member of the Political Service, Trench's book is largely concerned with those of his colleagues who served the Raj during the thirty odd years, 1919-47, preceding the transfer of power In a brief reference, he offers a colourful, if not altogether reliable, account of Nehru's October 1946 visit to the Frontier based on the impressions of the Political Agents posted there at the time His conclusions Nehru had 'behaved foolishly, sometimes hysterically, but with considerable courage' At the same time, his visit 'must have fortified his hatred and distrust' of the Indian Political Service even though a judicial enquiry later 'found no evidence' to support his allegations that the Politicals had 'instigated' the demonstrations against him

D G Tendulkar's impressive biography of Badshah Khan, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan faith is a battle* (New Delhi, 1967) though not directly relevant to this essay affords a good understanding of the thinking and politics of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and offers an authentic picture of the background against which the transfer of power drama unfolded both in New Delhi and the NWFP

Baren Ray's 'Pakhtunistan National Movement and Transfer of Power in India' in Amit Kumar Gupta (ed) *Myth and Reality* (New Delhi, 1984) underscores the point that US policy towards Pakistan in the post-1947 years represented 'a neocolonialist hold superimposed upon the colonial institutions established by the British' and that responsibility for much of this mischief lay squarely with Olaf Caroe and men of his ilk The paper draws upon an impressive array of secondary sources to buttress Ray's thesis on the Raj's manoeuvres and machinations preceding independence especially as those related to the Frontier

The author's own 'Pathans and the Birth of Pakistan Transfer of Power in the NWFP, 1945-47', *Indo-British Review*, 17, 1-2, September-December 1989 draws upon most if not all the sources listed in the preceding paragraphs Heavily

annotated, it may satisfy the researcher looking for specific leads and may be recommended supplementary reading to the present exercise In the latter, both in content and presentation, a conscious effort has been made to keep repetition to the minimal

9

Badshah Khan and Sheikh Abdullah: The Crusade for an Ideal

Riyaz Punjabi

The status and role of Muslims in the newly emerging society and polity of Indian subcontinent started occupying the minds of Muslim intelligentsia from 1857, when mutiny or the First War of Independence broke out against British rule The reaction of the Indian masses, and the responses of British authorities to the mutiny, brought forth in a subtle way the pattern of social differentiation between the two major communities, *viz* Hindus and Muslims The all pervading social atmosphere of a composite cultural identity, so well nurtured by the Mughal kings, and reinforced by social and spiritual movements led by *sufis* and *sants*, had started waning since Aurangzeb's rule which saw the coercive policy of strict adherence to Islamic Shariah in its literal sense The advent of the British did add to the richness of this composite culture in many ways at different levels of society, yet, at the social level, the British advent also posed a great challenge to this very identity Thus, one of the major consequences of the mutiny was the considered state policy of 'divide' on the part of the British, inducing people and particularly their leaders, to develop their perceptions on communitarian lines In this scenario, the

issue of Indian nationhood started assuming prominence in the Indian intellectual circles In view of the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural nature of Indian society, it was bound to become a crucial issue

It is around this time that the debate on nationhood attracted great attention of Muslim elites in the Indian subcontinent In the backdrop of complexities of Indian society, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), the noted Muslim reformer and educationist, appears to be the first Muslim to articulate the perceptions of the Muslim elite on the composition and dimensions of Indian nationhood In his speech in Gurdaspur in January 1884, he said

> Remember that the words Hindu and Mahomedan are only meant for religious distinction — otherwise all persons, whether Hindu or Mahomedan even the Christians who reside in this country, are all in this particular respect belonging to one and the same nation (Cheers) Then all these different sects can only be described as one nation, they must each and all unite for the good of the country which is common to all [1]

The vacillations on the part of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan aside, he did attempt to arrive at a definition of nation from the Indian Muslim viewpoint In a way, he was making an endeavour to resolve the dilemma which was gradually shaping up in the Muslim mind In this regard, he drew inspiration from the historical Arab perception of India The Arabs had described the area across Sind as 'al-Hind', and the people who inhabited it as 'Hindi' — the people belonging to 'Hind' In a speech in Lahore, Sir Syed Ahmad concluded his discourse on the subject in these words

> In the word Nation I include both Hindus and Mahomedans because that is the only meaning which I can attach to it
>
> I call both those races which inhabit India by one word, *i e Hindu*, meaning to say that they are the inhabitants of Hindustan [2]

The pendulum of the Muslim elite opinion on the issue of nationhood swung from one to the other, and by the first quarter of the 20th century, the idea that Muslims constituted a separate nation in India started coming into vogue The perception of Muslims belonging to a separate nation resulted in the division of the subcontinent on religious lines, and the creation of Pakistan

II

A study of the history of freedom struggle in India, and an assessment of the contribution made by the Muslims to the movement, reveal that their leadership of the movement was divided into two streams of thought At one end of the spectrum of Muslim political arena was the leadership who wanted a separate homeland for the Muslims on the basis that they constituted a separate nation And at the other end of the spectrum was yet another set of leadership who rejected the thesis that their religion only formed the basis of a nation This set of leadership advocated and emphasized their religious identity without compromising the unity of India The task of this leadership was quite arduous On the one hand, they had to face the onslaught of those who advocated the theory that religion formed the basis of nationhood On the other hand, they had to dissuade their co-religionists from taking to this course, and also to fathom the futility of this very notion on which the basis of a nationhood was sought to be built The great Islamic scholar and author, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, became the ideologue of this very school of thought It fell to his lot to build his hypothesis, marshal the arguments, and convince his co-religionists about the composite colour of Indian nationhood, to which Islam added a very bright colour In his historic speech in the 53rd Session of the Indian National Congress at Mazharpuri (Ramgarh) in March 1940, Maulana Azad said

This thousand years of our joint life has moulded us

> into a common nationality This can not be done artistically Nature does her fashioning through her hidden processes in the course of centuries The cast has now been moulded and destiny has set her seal upon it Whether we like it or not, we have now become an Indian nation, united and indivisible[3]

The arguments advanced by the opposite party were no less interesting For instance

> The Muslims all over the world are, therefore, a single nation (*Millat*) just as the Jews are a single nationality whether they be German, English or Russian As Islamic nationalism is non-spacial and non-racial, Muslims living in different parts of the world and belonging to different races, are above territorial and racial patriotisms Their separate states only denote administrative units[4]

Debatable though this argument is, it found currency in the substantial Muslim groupings at that time Moreover, the distinction between 'Millat' (a nation in the religious sense) and 'Quam' (a nation in cultural and territorial sense) evoked a great deal of discussion and debate among Muslim scholars and political leaders It is the definition of these two political terms in the Urdu language which determined the boundary lines of two different and varying perceptions of nationhood among Muslims

Maulana Azad articulated his perceptions in these words

> As a Musalman I have a special interest in Islamic religion and culture and I cannot tolerate any interference with them But in addition to these sentiments, I have others also which the realities and conditions of my life have forced upon me The spirit of Islam does not come in the way of these sentiments, it guides and helps me forward I am proud of being an Indian I am a part of the indivisible unity that is Indian nationality I am indispensable to this noble edifice and without me this splendid structure of India is incomplete I am an essential element which has

gone to build India I can never surrender this claim [5]

The fear of future set up of India, generally heightened by the Muslim separatist leadership, occupied the Muslim mind greatly Thus, the apprehension of a section of the Muslim elite found expression in these words

> The-Muslim demand is actuated by a genuine desire which is practically impossible under the type of unitary government contemplated by the nationalist Hindu politicians with a view to securing permanent communal dominance in the whole of India [6]

The apprehension articulated by Mohammad Iqbal, the poet-philosopher, who became an ideologue of a separate Muslim nation state, was mainly based on two counts Firstly, that Hindus were a monolithic mass of people, and a cohesive religious group who were bound together by their religious bond as the Muslims were In fact, he did not comprehend that 'Hindu' was a cultural term, which in later period became a religious term through political and legal processes In this behalf, Mahatma Gandhi preferred to use the term 'Sanatan Dharam' in place of 'Hindu Dharma' Moreover, the caste.and sectarian differences and complexities would generally prevent the Hindus from becoming a monolithic and cohesive religious group Secondly, Mohammad Iqbal, consciously or unconsciously, preferred to ignore the federal character of Indian ethos and civilization Sooner or later, this ethos had to be reflected in the political edifice of India The historical and cultural factors were bound to pull back the socio-political system towards federalization even if it was sought to be built on a unitary basis

Maulana Azad attempted to remove these apprehensions of Muslims regarding their status in the future set up of India by proposing the following formula

(1) Whatever constitution is adopted for India, there must be the fullest guarantees in it for the rights and interests of the minorities

(2) The minorities should judge for themselves what

> safeguards are necessary for the protection of their rights and interests The majority should not decide this Therefore, the decision in this respect must depend upon the consent of the minorities and not on the majority vote [7]

Maulana further opined that

> The question of the minorities is not a special Indian problem It has existed in other parts of the world I venture to address the world, from this platform, and to enquire whether any juster and more equitable course of action can be adopted in this connection than the one suggested above?[8]

The debate in the Indian Constituent Assembly proved the point which Maulana Azad was trying to make a few years before the Independence of India

The debate among Muslim leaders and scholars at times turned quite acrimonious Thus Mohammad Ali Jinnah described Maulana Azad as a " Muslim show-boy Congress president to give it colour that it is national and to deceive foreign countries "[9] Mohammad Iqbal, at one point of time had called Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the "chief actor in the secret conspiracies between Hindu leaders and British activists"[10] (against Muslims)

III

The Muslim leadership who challenged the two-nation theory, and stressed the Hindu-Muslim unity and emphasized the cultural assertion of the groups of people cutting across the religious barriers, drew sustenance for their thesis and arguments from Islam, which added strength to their claims It is interesting to note that nobody showed the capacity to counterpoise their arguments at least on this plane They viewed Hindu-Muslim relations in the Indian sub-continent in the context of Islamic history the world over In fact, they marshalled their arguments from the interpretation of Islam to counterpoise the contentions

which were forwarded in support of establishing a separate state on religious lines Thus Maulana Azad said in April 1946

> I must confess that the very term Pakistan goes against my grain It suggests that some portions of it are pure while others are impure Such a division of territories into pure and impure is un-islamic and a repudiation of the very spirit of Islam Islam recognises no such division and the Prophet says, God "has made the whole world a mosque for me" In such context, the demand for Pakistan loses all force, as a Muslim, I for one not prepared for a moment to give up my right to treat the whole of India as my domain to share in the shaping of its political and economic life To me it seems a sure sign of cowardice to give up what is my patrimony and content myself with a mere fragment of it [11]

This statement was the reiteration of the socio-political ideas which Maulana Azad had been disseminating for more than four decades during the course of struggle for freedom He had influenced a galaxy of Muslim scholars and political leaders who drew inspiration from his philosophy, interpretation of Islam, ideas and writings

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who was bestowed upon the title of Badshah Khan affectionately by his own people in the Frontier, and Sheikh Abdullah, who was Sher-i-Kashmir to his people in Kashmir, were the two prominent Muslim leaders who shared the vision and perceptions of Maulana Azad They struggled to build up their respective politics and societies on the perceptions of Azad

Badshah Khan and Sheikh Abdullah were both inspired by Maulana Azad He made a profound impact on both of them for resolving the conflict of religion in politics, and in their struggle to establish the rule of their people In fact Badshah Khan had started his educational activities by establishing schools in the Frontier with Haji Abdul Wahid Sahib of Turangzai Haji Sahib, who was the first

social reformer in the Frontier, was actively involved in the educational uplift of children of the Frontier He had a band of dedicated young activists, and he also invited Badshah Khan to join him It is around this period that Badshah Khan started getting influenced by Maulana Azad's writings According to Badshah Khan, his political education began with his regular reading of Maulana Azad's *Al-Hilal* and Zafar Ali Khan's *Zamindar* The influence of Maulana Azad is clearly seen in his discourses on Islam, Indian Muslims and Hindu-Muslim unity Badshah Khan gradually became a member of the leading Muslim group comprising Maulana Azad, Mahmud Hasan Deobandi, and Mohammad Hussain Madani The mission of Badshah Khan was quite arduous He had to educate his people, discipline them and prepare them to face and resolve the unforeseen situations of communal conflict His formidable challenge was to initiate his people, who loved their gun more than anything else, into the philosophy of non-violence Badshah Khan, in his pursuit to accomplish his task, turned to the *Quran*, Islamic teachings and Muslim history He exhibited remarkable ability and capacity to translate and communicate the Islamic teachings through Pashto to convince his illiterate, ignorant and violent people, and discipline their impetuous instincts Mahatma Gandhi and Badshah Khan used different devices, but they had the same objectives — *ahimsa* (non-violence), Hindu-Muslim amity and freedom from British rule Mahatma Gandhi drew his strength from *dharmik* treatises and Indian culture and ethos, and Badshah Khan turned to the *Quran* and Islamic history

Badshah Khan initiated his people into the philosophy of non-violence gradually by drawing support from Islam He went from place to place, explaining, coaxing and stimulating Pakhtuns by his ideas The socio-political graph of his vision and its impact on the people emerges quite clearly if one follows the speeches which he made from place to place, particularly between 1930-31 The number of Khudai Khidmatgars and other sympathizers also keeps

on rising from one meeting to another, and Badshah Khan goes on his mission of galvanizing the whole Pakhtun society Thus in November 1931, while addressing a meeting of Khudai Khidmatgars, he said

> If you do something, you do it for your own sake God and Prophet will be pleased at your doing so and your children will not be hungry and naked If you would not gird up your loins today, then you would become mean and wretched [12]

He goes on repeating this theme from one place to another He lays stress on the importance of liberating one's country from alien rule He turns to the *Quran* for the liberation of one's own country He said

> Slavery is a curse and wrath of God Get rid of it I do not say this but it is written in the Quran If anybody doubts he should bring the Quran and we will show it to him [13]

He addresses the Hindus in these words "As far as I understand the Gita slavery was a curse "[14] Then he introduces the theme of 'non-violence' as a device to achieve liberation from British rule He uses the term 'patience' in place of 'non-violence' in his first phase of introducing this concept He draws inspiration from the *Quran* (God is with those who observe patience — *Al-Quran*), and from the conduct and behaviour of the Prophet of Islam He mentions about the 'weapon' (device) through which this liberation can be achieved in these words

> People must have an idea that, that is a new weapon — that weapon is the weapon of 'patience' This weapon is Prophet Mohammad's (peace be upon him) weapon This is a tested weapon [15]

He dwells at length upon the miseries and tortures borne by the Muslims with patience in Mecca in the early phase of the advent of Islam As Badshah Khan moves ahead on his march to galvanize Pakhtun society, he uses his concepts more directly and clearly In November 1931, he said at Torballu

> If my brothers, you ever take this thing, this weapon in hands, then, so powerful is the weapon, that neither the machine gun nor the aeroplane, nor the army of the King, nor the Police or a Platoon can stand against you That weapon with the help of which you can make your country free and put an end to this Foreign Government is 'patience' Understand? It is non-violence [16]

Then he further explains

> Let the Muslims see their own history and they will find that this battle of non-violence is not a new one This is the same battle which some of my brothers might have read, was fought at Mecca by the oppressed for their country Fourteen hundred years ago this fight was named the fight of the 'oppressed'[17]

Badshah Khan's labours bore fruit, and not only men but also women rallied behind him It was a significant achievement in view of the traditional and orthodox character of Pakhtun society In December 1931, he informed a huge gathering at Banda Sheikh Ismail

> Brothers, at Swabi I was requested by the women not to allow the young men to go to jails this time because they thought that it was not the duty of men [only] to go to jails and expressed their own wish to go [18]

Badshah Khan's technique of disseminating the message of Hindu-Muslim unity was unique, and he attempted to bring it about through the movement of Khudai Khidmatgars He described a Khudai Khidmatgar in these words

> One who serves the creatures of God is called a Khudai Khidmatgar If you wish to serve God, then he can become a Khudai Khidmatgar who would serve the creatures of God The Musalmans only are not the creatures of God, but it includes the Hindus, Sikhs, Christians and all the natives of this place It is explained to them that whosoever be a tyrant — may it be a Musalman a Hindu, or an English, you will have to oppose them [19]

Badshah Khan was obviously evoking the well-known Islamic concept that God has been described as *Rabb-ul-Alimeen* (Lord of the Universe) and not as *Rabb-ul-Muslimeen* (Lord of the Muslims) in the *Holy Quran*

Badshah Khan approached to resolve the Hindu-Muslim conflict through cultural and regional assertion of the people in the Frontier Province He exhorted his people to be Pakhtuns first, and said

> It is the duty of every brother to learn Pushto whether he may be a Hindu, a Musalman or a Sikh we all are one 'Pakhtun' includes all the tribes who inhabit this part of the country [20]

Badshah Khan's understanding of Islam helped him to justify his political actions and party alignments He explained his alliance with Congress Party in these words

> The Holy Prophet has made an agreement with the Jew — has made a compromise with the Christians I want to show to you that there is no restriction in *Sheriat* that do not make agreements or compromises with others for the progress of Islam, for the attainment of Independence and in order to save oneself from the enemy We are openly permitted My brethren would have grasped the reality That we are with the Congress, would have understood this thing [21]

Badshah Khan had to face the criticism of aligning with the Congress, which was described as a 'Hindu party' by the supporters of the Muslim League In November 1931, at Mansehra, he provided the *raison d'etre* for his alignment with the Congress Party He said that he had sent his men to "Musalmans of India" and "Muslim leaders"[22] but nobody helped them He said that he was informed that there was a party called Indian National Congress and he told his people to unite with them and that was how the relations of their Frontier Jirga were established with the Congress

In December 1931, at Bekai, he described the Congress Party in these words

The Jirgah of India is called Congress In English Congress means Jirgah This is a Jirgah of Hindustan (India) This Jirgah is not only of Hindus, rather in this Jirgah there are Hindus, Musalmans, Sikhs, Jews and Christians and it includes all the communities of India It is not the Jirgah of only Hindus You should hear why we have joined with the Congress I have said to you that the Congress is a common Jirgah of all the communities of India [23]

V

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah came into contact with Badshah Khan in 1937 "It was a strange coincidence," writes Sheikh Abdullah in his autobiography *Aatish-i-Chinar* Sheikh Abdullah wanted to see Jawaharlal Nehru who was at that time in Lahore, and was scheduled to leave for the Frontier Province on a tour The Sheikh was advised to see him at Lahore Railway Station It was their first meeting, and both of them got so much absorbed in their conversation till the train started moving Sheikh Abdullah was persuaded by Jawaharlal Nehru to accompany him to the Frontier Province so that they could have detailed discussions on different subjects According to Sheikh Abdullah

It is in this tour that I was introduced to Badshah Khan, and other Red Shirt leaders This tour laid the foundation of my eternal bond with Badshah Khan, which stands firm and evergreen in spite of the vicissitudes of time [24] (Translation)

Badshah Khan and Sheikh Abdullah were almost of the same built They were of the same height This made them conspicuous in any crowd and and at any place — the tall and towering personalities They shared the common world-view, and faced the identical problems, dilemmas and predilections in their struggles to free their people from slavery and in their battles against communalism They appear to have been destined to undergo the similar type of traumas in their respective societies and polities in the post-Independence era of the subcontinent

Historically, Badshah Khan and Sheikh Abdullah had both emerged from the identical socio-cultural milieu The Frontier Province and Kashmir, where Badshah Khan and Sheikh Abdullah were born and grew up, shared a common historical and cultural past Both these places have been great centres of Indian civilization in a larger context (The Frontier Province was called 'Gandhara' in ancient times, and Kashmir has been a part of Gandhara at a certain point of time) The Frontier Province and Kashmir were prominent centres of Buddhism The Stupas and Vihars built by Kanishka and Ashoka at both the places which are now in a state of ruin, are reminiscent of that past The *Vedas* were compiled at both these places

Pathans, like Kashmiris, were Hindus and Buddhists who were later converted to Islam Sheikh Abdullah would mention with pride about his Brahmin ancestry He would also mention about the Brahmin progenitors of Mohammad Iqbal — the creater of Pakistan, about which the poet himself would make a mention with pride [25]

Sheikh always asserted that enslavement of Kashmiris had started with the Mughal annexation of Kashmir He owned that part of Kashmir history with pride which was predominantly Hindu, because it was indigenous, and disowned that part which was predominantly Muslim, because it was alien He wrote

> Kashmir has held a specific individual position historically, geographically and civilisationally, which the foreign colonisers have been trying to dissolve, distort and wipe out for the past four hundred years In our struggle we had to confront both, non-Kashmiri Muslims as well as non-Kashmiri Hindus [26] (Translation)

Badshah Khan equally did not make any distinction between Hindus and Muslims as far as their domination of the Frontier was concerned He said Why were the Durranis [Afghans] removed [from the Frontier], because

they were tyrants The Sikhs were removed because they were tyrants The Firangi [British] will also be removed, because he practises tyranny[27]

It seems that Sheikh Abdullah's first visit to the Frontier Province in 1937 which resulted in his close proximity to Badshah Khan, brought him under the influence of Maulana's ideas and philosophy In August 1938, when Sheikh Abdullah was arrested, and put in solitary confinement in Kathua (Jammu) Jail, he started spinning the wheel for the first time He writes

> Apart from spinning the wheel during this confinement, I got a copy of the interpretation of the *Quran* [*The Tarjuman al-Qur'an*] by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad This interpreter of the *Quran* had discovered the real jewel of broad mindedness of Islam This study further strengthened [my] nationalist beliefs[28] (Translation)

Sheikh Abdullah writes that Maulana Azad was "second such personality whose presence proved to be a great attraction for us to put our destiny in the hands of India "

VI

The bonds between Badshah Khan, Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad and Sheikh Abdullah, and sharing a common vision of India on their part, had a great impact on the events in Kashmir The perceptions of Sheikh Abdullah about the future of Kashmir appear to have been articulated sharply after his meeting with Jawaharlal Nehru and Badshah Khan According to Sheikh Abdullah, "Jawaharlal Nehru had the same very deep concern about Kashmir which the poet Mohammad Iqbal held for it "[29] According to him, he met other nationalist leaders also and felt that the "salvation of the Kashmiris lay in their coming out of the narrow confines and uniting with a national mainstream " In this connection, Sheikh Abdullah came into contact with the famous nationalist Muslim leader Saifuddin Kitchlew, who himself was concerned about Kashmir Sheikh

Abdullah held a press conference at Dr Kitchlew's residence in Amritsar, and said

> The communal tension in Kashmir is mainly the result of propaganda on the part of communal leaders of the Punjab. We want that the people of the Punjab should abstain from interfering in our internal affairs My future work would be on the [lines] and principles of the Congress [Party] And very shortly after my return to my country, I intend to lay the foundations of an organization which will have a nationalist ideology [30] (Translation)

According to Sheikh Abdullah "This statement, on the one hand, provided a handle to some Muslim organizations who were already opposed to him due to their communal outlook, to launch a tirade against him " And, on the other hand, a group of Hindus in Kashmir started to view his "bold and brave statement as his cunning, deceit and a strategy "[31] These challenges aside, Sheikh Abdullah did carry his colleagues with him, and convinced his workers to convert his party *Muslim Conference* into *National Conference*

In May 1939, Badshah Khan, accompanied by Jawaharlal Nehru, visited Kashmir for the first time They were accorded unprecedented reception right from Kohala, which formed the first check-post of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir They were carried in a decorated boat in the traditional boat-procession through the river Jhelum In the words of Sheikh Abdullah

> Ironically, during those days, when the Muslims in India, with the exception of the Frontier Province, were drifting away from the Congress, we in Kashmir were coming closer to it [32] (Translation)

Badshah Khan's visit further strengthened his bonds with Sheikh Abdullah and Kashmir In 1941, Badshah Khan attended, as a special invitee, the Second Annual Conference of the National Conference in Srinagar

The mental affinities and their common objectives resulted in their frequent visits to each other's province, and they would participate in each other's social and political activities. In 1945, Sheikh Abdullah participated in a Congress convention in Peshawar He said in his speech that Maulana Azad, Badshah Khan and Syed Mahmud were great Islamic scholars and yet they did not exploit religion for achieving their political ends

In August 1945, Badshah Khan along with Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Azad, Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai, Mian Iftikharuddin and Asaf Ali again visited Kashmir Addressing the National Conference Convention in Huzoori Bagh (now Iqbal Park), Srinagar, Badshah Khan said·

> Sheikh Abdullah is a gift from God to the Kashmiris If you do not follow him, you will be in loss [33] (Translation)

After this convention, another convention was convened in Sopore, south of Kashmir Here, the National Conference adopted a resolution on the right of self-determination, which was supported by Jawaharlal Nehru Earlier in Srinagar, when a galaxy of Indian national leaders was passing through the river Jhelum in boat-procession, a group of pro-Muslim Conference workers who owed their allegiance to Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah, the arch rival of Sheikh Abdullah, pelted stones on the procession at a point considered to be their stronghold In the Sopore Convention, Badshah Khan in his speech referred to the incident of stone-pelting in Srinagar and said in a lighter vein

> At least you have gathered the courage of pelting stones It is no mean achievement Earlier, if a leader came from outside you were scared even to see him. Is that not matter of happiness that now you have gathered the courage to shower stones upon them?[34] (Translation)
>
> By that time, Badshah Khan had become a familiar face in Kashmir which could be recognized from a distance

Badshah Khan and Sheikh Abdullah had to face the onslaught of not only Muslim fanatics but also of the Hindu extremists According to Sheikh Abdullah

> I was being grounded like wheat between the two parts of the grindstone of narrow-minded Hindu and Muslim communalists However, this test convinced me more than ever that we were right on our basic stand Our relations with the Congress leaders went on intimate lines after forming the National Conference The credit for this goes to the comradeship and politeness of these leaders However, we neither completely merged our National Conference with the Congress nor did we mortgage our minds to them I can see the same struggle [in my mind] when I look back to the state of affairs of the last forty years A big wave awaits to swallow us and obliterate our individuality and identity And we are saving our personality by lighting a small lamp and saving it from the adverse trend of the winds[35] [blowing to put it off] (Translation)

Badshah Khan had to undergo worst experiences in 1933 when the members of the Hindu Mahasabha opposed the adoption of certain measures in the Indian Legislative Assembly on the grounds of 'maintaining law and order' in the Frontier These measures would have eased certain draconian restrictions on the Khudai Khidmatgars Jawaharlal Nehru is reported to have been greatly anguished by this attitude of the Hindu Mahasabha He dreamt

> Abdul Ghaffar Khan was being attacked from all directions, and I was trying to defend him When I woke up, I felt dead tired, and my heart was sinking My tears had turned my pillow wet[36] (Translation)

Badshah Khan had to face the challenges of communal tensions and communal riots from time to time He and his Khudai Khidmatgars were always there to face this challenge and they always succeeded in bringing about peace and instil confidence into the people In 1924, the communal

riots broke out in Kohat in the Frontier Province, and Badshah Khan went from village to village to bring about peace and harmony, and he spent one and a half year in this mission Similarly, Sheikh Abdullah had to face the great ordeal in 1947 when communal riots broke out in Jammu He and his party saw to it that there was no reaction in Kashmir It is in this context that Mahatma Gandhi saw a 'ray of hope in Kashmir' when the whole subcontinent was caught in the communal holocaust

VII

Badshah Khan and Sheikh Abdullah were the two leaders who did not fit in the political framework of Mohammad Ali Jinnah In this regard, the National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir State, and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier Province, always remained outside the orbit of the Muslim League Sheikh Abdullah met Mohammad Ali Jinnah in Delhi in 1935, and tried to explain his viewpoint to him According to Sheikh Abdullah

> I told him that experience has proved that the basic problem does not arise because of the confrontation between various religions [religious groups] But the problem arises owing to the economic inequality among different sections of society On the one side, there are the exploiters, and on the other, there are the exploited We are fighting against the system, and not against personalities It would be sheer short sightedness to fight our battle on Hindu-Muslim lines [17] (Translation)

According to Sheikh Abdullah, Mr Jinnah gave him a patient hearing, and in the end he spoke in an 'elderly fashion'

> I am just like your father, and my hair have turned grey in politics My experience teaches me that Hindus can not be trusted They can never become your friends I have tried the whole of my life to own them,

> but I failed to gain their confidence The time will come when you will recall my words and feel sorry[38] [for your actions] (Translation)

Jinnah kept on prompting the Muslim Conference in Kashmir However, in May 1944, when he visited Kashmir, the National Conference decided to accord a hero's welcome to him as a great Indian Muslim leader The National Conference did accord him a grand reception in his capacity as 'Quaid-i-Azam' (the great leader), but the jubilation turned bitter when Jinnah said that the reception was accorded to him in his capacity as President of the All-India Muslim League, and it was obviously a reception to the ideals of Muslim League It was clearly an embarrassment to Sheikh Abdullah and his party — the National Conference Sheikh Abdullah convened several meetings in Srinagar city and explained his position to the people Jinnah equally came out in the open to support the Muslim Conference, and urged the people to shun the politics of Sheikh Abdullah and the National Conference This vitiated the whole atmosphere Jinnah was not allowed to hold any public meeting peacefully during his stay in Srinagar When he left Kashmir in July 1944, he urged Maharaja Hari Singh to deal with 'anti-social elements' and 'goondas' in Kashmir according to law He accused Sheikh Abdullah of indulging "in all sorts of language of a most offensive and vituperative character in attacking"[39] him

Sheikh Abdullah reveals that Jinnah had advised the leaders of the Muslim Conference that they should not annoy Maharaja Hari Singh in any way According to Sheikh Abdullah "Mr Jinnah had told the Muslim Conference workers in his own western fashion that they should adopt the habit of raising the slogan of 'Maharaja Zindabad' [long live] in the same manner as they offered Namaz for five times a day"[40] (Translation)

Sheikh Abdullah always held that the Muslim Conference, supported by Mr Jinnah, was working in tandem with the

Maharaja of Kashmir, against whose autocratic rule a movement had been launched by the National Conference Badshah Khan equally held that Muslim League leaders in the Frontier Province were British agents Badshah Khan and Sheikh Abdullah believed in an ideology and envisaged a polity which was quite contrary to the one believed and perceived by Mohammad Ali Jinnah In fact, they were poles apart and could not meet at any point

VIII

Badshah Khan and Sheikh Abdullah shared the vision of Maulana Azad to build an India in which ethnic identities would flourish, the polity would be built to usher in a society which promised an egalitarian order Thus, whereas, Badshah Khan would shake the Pakhtuns to 'just look at your tattered clothes and your bootless children,' Sheikh Abdullah would arouse his people by pointing out to their 'tattered *phirans* [long robes worn by Kashmiri people] and empty stomachs '

Both the leaders preached and practised the ideal that service to mankind was service to God, a concept which transcends religious differentiation and fanaticism Sheikh Abdullah used the religious idiom to galvanize the people, and adopted the middle path between orthodoxy and modernity as far as religious matters were concerned He first made Khankahi Maulla Mosque as his base camp to disseminate his political ideas, but later he shifted to Hazratbal Dargah to give his discourses on social and political issues

Sheikh Abdullah believed

> The movements of renaissance and freedom of nations appear in the religious garb in the beginning Since religion creates vibrations in human sentiments quickly, therefore the national consciousness starts flowering in the bossom of religion In this regard, the religious movements led by Haji Murad in some Asian States

of Russia, Abdul Wahab Najdi's renaissance movement under Ottoman Caliphate, and the *jihad* of Shah Ismail Shahid and Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi in India, and the movements led by Swami Dayanand, Rammohun Roy, Tilak, Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi were all based on religion However, out of these movements emerged the great movements of nationalism and freedom The same thing happened in Arab countries, where these movements took a turn towards anti-imperialism and Arab nationalism [41] (Translation)

Sheikh Abdullah was well aware of the potential of religion to arouse national consciousness, but at the same time he had another device *i e* assertion of cultural identity, to put a check on the religious edge of Kashmir identity, which was the mainstay of his movement and struggle, from getting sharpened

It needs to be understood that the Congress had emerged as an all-India party, especially after the Lahore Congress in 1929, and the Karachi Congress in 1931 It was being perceived as a party which would build a democratic federal polity after Independence The specific ethnic groups saw greater opportunities of autonomy and cultural assertion in such a party In this regard, Jawaharlal Nehru supported the idea that the Congress should have a separate name in the Frontier, Congress Frontier Jirga, in spite of the opposition from a section of Congressmen In the same manner, he sought the co-operation of the National Conference at the national level, and pleaded that it should be left alone in Jammu and Kashmir State

The assertion of Kashmir identity brought Sheikh Abdullah in direct confrontation with Mohammad Ali Jinnah However, this very assertion again brought Sheikh Abdullah at loggerheads with India in the post-Independence era The agitation started by the Praja Parishad and supported by Jana Sangh in Jammu for complete merger of Jammu and Kashmir State into the Indian Union, and vacillation on the part of some national leaders to accord

a special constitutional status to Jammu and Kashmir State soon after its accession to India, created apprehensions in the minds of Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues It is interesting to note that even Maulana Azad did little to alleviate these apprehensions, as Sheikh Abdullah complains in his autobiography The dismissal of the Sheikh Abdullah Government in 1953 created many complications and Kashmir continues to be a problem with dangerous potentialities in the geopolitics of Southeast Asia even today Sheikh Abdullah remained in and out of jail for twenty-two long years A conspiracy case was filed against him by the government, which was later withdrawn Sheikh Abdullah returned to Indian national mainstream as a consequence of Indira Gandhi-Sheikh Abdullah Accord of 1975 However, it is relevant to note that after his release from jail in 1964 when Sheikh Abdullah met Jawaharlal Nehru after almost eleven years, the two friends and comrades had 'tears in their eyes' According to Sheikh Abdullah, Jawaharlal Nehru told him that whatever had happened to him was against his (Nehru's) wishes However, as Prime Minister of the country, he owned responsibility (for all the events) Sheikh Abdullah replied back

> Even after what I have undergone, if I have succeeded in convincing you that I neither cheated you nor played fraud against India, I will feel that my long and difficult meditation has not gone waste [42] (Translation)

The struggle of Sheikh Abdullah against Maharaja's rule in Jammu and Kashmir, and his close collaboration with the Indian National Congress, and his rejection of the two nation theory has historical and ideological justification However, his confrontation with the Government of India and his subsequent incarceration deserves a close socio-historic inquiry

It appears that the failure of the Cabinet Mission Plan in May 1946 had changed the mind-set and perceptions of the Indian leadership, excluding Mahatma Gandhi

Ironically, Badshah Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars had to bear the brunt of the fall out of the failure of the Cabinet Mission Plan The Congress Working Committee decision in June 1947 to accept the Muslim League formula to hold a referendum in the Frontier had stunned Badshah Khan He told Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee

> We Pakhtuns stood by you and had undergone great sacrifices for attaining freedom, but you have now deserted us and thrown us to the wolves We shall not agree to hold referendum because we had decisively won the elections on the issue of Hindustan versus Pakistan and proclaimed the Pakhtun view on it to the world Now as India has disowned us, why should we have a referendum on Hindustan and Pakistan? Let it be on Pakhtunistan or Pakistan [43]

History places the individuals in strange dilemmas and in unforeseen circumstances When Badshah Khan emerged from the Working Committee meeting 'numbed and dejected' he sat on the steps According to him

> The Sardar said I was worrying over nothing Maulana Azad was sitting near me Noticing my dejection he said to me, 'You should now join the Muslim League' It pained me to find how little these companions of ours had understood what we had stood for and fought for all these years Did they imagine we would compromise our principles for the sake of power?[44]

Badshah Khan did not abandon his principles and did not abdicate his stand and on 8 June 1947, even after the Congress Working Committee had approved the referendum plan in the Frontier, he wrote to Mahatma Gandhi "We are also against Pakistan and we would like to have a free Pathan state within India "[45]

In July, the referendum was held in the Frontier Badshah Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars boycotted it He remarked

> I regret to say that not we but the Congress deserted us If we had agreed to leave the Congress, the Britishers would have granted us all our demands, and it is my firm conviction that if the Congress lent support to our demand, as it had done in the case of Gurdaspur, Jinnah would have been compelled to agree to our proposal — Pakhtunistan or Pakistan Jinnah sent us messages time and again to make common cause with him, in which case he would concede to us whatever we wanted We never compromised our principles [46]

The partition of India and creation of Pakistan witnessed Badshah Khan's demand for an autonomous Pakhtunistan within Pakistan His demand earned him long incarcerations, and the issue remains unresolved even today

> Badshah Khan remained quite concerned about Kashmir even in Pakistan According to him, "Twice I offered my services in connection with Kashmir, during the lifetime of Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah and after his death, but my offer was not accepted The party-in-power felt that if the Kashmir question was settled through us, it would create goodwill towards us amongst masses and damage to their prestige" [47]

IX

Badshah Khan met his old friend Sheikh Abdullah in 1969, twenty-two years after the partition of India, in New Delhi, where the former had come to attend the birth centenery celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi According to Sheikh Abdullah, he "found his old friend physically weak, but mentally very alert Badshah Khan was anguished to witness growing communalism in India "

Badshah Khan visited Kashmir for the last time in the autumn of 1981 His health was failing Addressing the youth there he said that they had now grown old, but they had done their bit It was for the youth to reconstruct their happy valley and the great country India

Badshah Khan and Sheikh Abdullah, the Khudai Khidmatgars and the National Conference became the victims of partition of the subcontinent Both these leaders and their respective parties had in no way conducted their struggles on communitarian lines, nor had they in anyway contributed to communal politics In October 1948, Sheikh Abdullah said

> We have to fight the communalism of Pakistani Muslims as well as the communalism of Hindus of the East Punjab In case we find opposition to this programme in India, then we shall have to again reconsider our position [48] (Translation)

In fact, both the leaders had aligned with the Congress Party which they had perceived as a party which would accommodate various cultural and ethnic identities of the subcontinent Both these leaders had a vision of India as a federation of nationalities, and both of them continued their struggles to accomplish their vision, even after the partition of the country

The partition of India created more problems than it solved for the peoples of both the countries India and Pakistan have witnessed three wars Pakistani has been fragmented into two parts Pakistani society as well as Kashmiri society is facing tribulations All these developments underline not only the desideratum of federalizing the polities of both the countries, India and Pakistan, but also to consider possibility of a confederation of all the nationalities and the States of Southeast Asia

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10

An Anthropologist Among Pakhtuns: Encounters with Badshah Khan's Khudai Khidmatgars

Mukulika Banerjee

My interest in Badshah Khan began the day he died I was a graduate student of Social Anthropology at the time, doing an area study on South-West Asia Anthropology was full of rich ethnography on the feuding Pakhtuns and the supporting literature described this warring and brave society through heroic tales Obituary columns of Badshah Khan, however, mourned the death of this heroic Pakhtun, leader of the Khudai Khidmatgars, as the greatest non-violent soldier of Islam, an unequalled nationalist leader who could be compared in stature only to Mahatma Gandhi A contradiction seemed apparent How could Badshah Khan in the 1930s-40s have led Pakhtuns, who swore by honour and by violence, to a movement of non-violence?

Four years later I seem to be no closer to the truth, but some issues have gained in clarity First, a closer look at the role of violence in traditional Pakhtun society is important in order to explain its eventual conversion to non-violence under Badshah Khan Pakhtun society belonged to a category of societies which anthropologists would call

Type B (after Evans-Pritchard and Meyer Fortes's classifications 1940) Access to legitimate violence in these societies is distributed right across social structure, across a system of 'nesting' segmentary lineages Conflict is settled by exchanges of violence between the segments which aggregate and segregate according to the particular situation, and thus social order is maintained This generates a particular understanding of politics as a social action

Second, the history of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement can be written by studying the category of 'thoughts about the past' in Pakhtun society (Davis 1990) Pakhtun men live long and several of them who actively participated in the Khudai Khidmatgar movement and were followers of Badshah Khan are alive today to tell this story Third, an understanding of the geopolitics of the NWFP and its role as a 'frontier area' of the British Empire is essential for an understanding of Badshah Khan's achievement in his life and politics These three major observations are discussed at greater length below and form the three sections of this paper

SECTION I

The Core of Violence

In all societies, violence lies at the heart of social order Societies vary according to the mechanisms by which they control legitimate and illegitimate violence Two principal kinds of societies or social formations are those where the monopoly of violence rests with a single agency i e the state or the army, and alternatively those where access to violence is distributed across various segments of social structure and giving rise to a system of balance of forces between segments Pakhtun society belonged to the latter category and the British Empire to the former, and this to me is the crux of the confrontation of the Khudai Khidmatgars with the British Government

To elaborate further, the British Empire was a 'national state' in as much as it was a "relatively centralized, differentiated organizations the officials of which more or less successfully claim control over the chief concentrated means of violence within a population inhabiting a large, contiguous territory" (Tilly 1985 170) Tilly effectively argues that the agents of states characteristically carry on four different activities

1 War making Eliminating or neutralizing their own rivals outside the territories in which they have clear and continuous priority as wielders of force
2 State making Eliminating or neutralizing their rivals inside those territories
3 Protection Eliminating or neutralizing the enemies of their clients
4 Extraction Acquiring the means of carrying out the first three activities — war making, state making and protection (Tilly 1985 181)

These activities of the State listed above are, Norbert Elias says, the result of the 'civilising process' of Western societies, which is characterized by an increasing monopoly over the means of violence by a single agency (namely the State), along with a corresponding increase in rationalisation of social behaviour The precondition of this 'civilising process', Elias states, "is a rise in the standard of living and in security, or in other words, increased protection from physical attack or destruction and thus from the uncontrollable fears which erupt far more powerfully and frequently into the lives of individuals in societies with less stable monopolies of force and lower division of functions" "At present", he adds, "we are so accustomed to the existence of these more stable monopolies of force and the greater predictability of violence resulting from them, that we scarcely see their importance for the structure of our conduct and our personality We scarcely realize how quickly what we call our 'reason', this relatively farsighted and differentiated steering of our conduct, with its high degree

of affect-control, would crumble or collapse if the anxiety-inducing tensions within and around us changed, if the fears affecting our lives suddenly became much stronger or much weaker or, as in many simpler societies, both at once, now stronger, now weaker" (Elias 1939 326)

The initial confrontation of the Pakhtuns with the British was a confrontation of two differing political conceptions of the management of violence with respect to the maintenance of social order

What is of interest therefore, is the way in which the Pakhtuns shifted in their strategy of opposition to the British by adopting non-violence resistance This change in Pakhtun society from being a feuding community to a non-violent one, seems paradoxical and intriguing and is, therefore, at the core of my enquiry

SECTION II

The method of my study is anthropological, the data being a collation of the 'thoughts about the past' in Pakhtun society today I borrow the term 'thoughts about the past' from John Davis who defines it as a combination of history, autobiography, myth and genealogy (Davis 1990) In real terms, it implies first, taking account of archival records, i e official reports and correspondence, secondly, perceptions of Pakhtun society from east and west of the Indus including the writings of Tagore, Kipling, Churchill and others My data also includes, importantly, Badshah Khan's autobiography *Zama Zindagi o Jiddo Jehad* and accounts given by the surviving Khudai Khidmatgars

The Khudai Khidmatgars with whom I held conversations in the course of the time spent in the NWFP, were those who had formed the rank and file of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement Badshah Khan himself and all the principal leaders of the movement are dead save one, Sarfaraz Nazim None of the interviewees worked closely with Badshah Khan

but all of them felt that they had known him well at a personal level

Here is a specially selected interview, but first let me outline the context in which a conversation such as this was typically held

Space, time and other givens always had to be negotiated Pakhtun society being extremely segregated in gender terms, a woman interviewing males was not a comfortable situation Invariably, a neutral ground, between the *hujra* (men's house) and the *zenana* (women's quarters) was created in order for us to have a space which we could all occupy comfortably Time scales, between a young anthropologist and interviewees whose average age was 90 years differed greatly Often on posing a preliminary question about the age of the interviewee, the reply was, " by the time you were born I had spun 20 sets of clothes" or "I had only 27 teeth when Badshah Khan first came to our village " The conversations never adhered to a set pattern of questions and answers but rather free, rambling chats in which I made occasional interrogative insertions Personal details were rarely kept separate by my informants from details of the movement or of Badshah Khan

A conversation with Maulavi Inayatullah s/o Maulana Hafiz Abdul Jamil of Toru, Mardan 82 years of age 29th March 1992

Where did the movement start and how?

The movement started in all the districts almost simultaneously Badshah Khan had been touring all the villages and forming *jirgas* in all of them The Khans of Charsadda and Mardan helped in the movement Of the latter, Amir Mohammed, Meher Dil Khan, Makarrab Khan were the prominent ones All the rest were with the British In their pay

Badshah Khan used tp visit every district three or four times In the first instance he used to meet with the Ulama, of whom some helped and others said that they did not

have the courage to join the movement but would support it Then the British would try and start buying them over On his second visit Badshah Khan would meet with the Khans and Maliks with some success

Why did the important people in the village listen to this young man?

It was because Badshah Khan's training was in Deoband and because he was an associate of the Haji of Turangzai It was British propaganda that the two had fallen out The Haji always blessed Badshah Khan for not having fled like him and for carrying on with the *jang-e-azadi* (war of independence)

Badshah Khan said that non-violence is the Congress policy and is our *aqueeda*

There was something special in the way that Badshah Khan spoke it was with love People listened to him not because he was a big Khan, there were Khans bigger than him

What was the nature of the organization of the movement?

In the organization, the elders joined the *jirga*, whether they were educated or not, the younger lot became Khudai Khidmatgars Those of the younger lot that was educated sometimes joined the *jirga* Posts were filled by people voluntarily, by the ones who were ready to make sacrifices

What was your personal involvement with the movement?

My father was a close friend of Badshah Khan and had known him for a long time I was in the provincial *jirga* for over six years We had a programme of action — picketting of courts, liquor shops, boycott of foreign cloth

Picketting was planned in such a way that when one batch of volunteers was beaten up they were carried away and a fresh batch took its place The police used to leave in resignation sometimes

One day Badshah Khan suddenly arrived in Mia Beda, a *mohalla* in our village The gujjars presented him a bowl of milk to blow on, in order to bless it, as he was considered

a holy man by them Badshah Khan who did not believe in superstition obliged because he did not want to disappoint people

Badshah Khan's great achievement was that he managed to educate Khudai Khidmatgars to recognize him as a political and nationalist leader and not as a *Sheikh* or *Buzurg*

What was Badshah Khan's relationship with the tribal areas?

Badshah Khan implicitly agreed with the Faqir of Ipi and the others because their violence was not offensive but defensive Badshah Khan always spoke against the Durand Line as well as the divisions between Settled and Tribal Districts because he maintained that it was British propaganda to keep the Pakhtuns divided

Were Pakhtuns united before the British arrived?

Feuding took its particular form only after the British came Earlier the *jirga* was the decision-making body and was totally egalitarian

What did holding a post in the organization mean?

Posts were created in our movement for entrusting responsibilities and for a division of labour Not, never, as positions of authority

Did the people read the journal Pakhtun?

We had worked out a system by which journals were distributed Copies were mailed to every president and secretary, which were then circulated within each district and more subscriptions were invited

Did you see a lot of the British?

Cunningham toured the province but met only the big Khans and Maliks He warned them about popular uprisings and promised his own support to them in quelling these

Did Dr Khan Sahib's ministry make a difference to the lives of the people in the Frontier?

Under Dr Khan Sahib's ministry the *lambardari* system was removed Earlier every *mohalla* had a *Lambardar* (one who collected taxes) who was given a wage, a *chowkidari* by the villagers

Dr Khan Sahib was not allowed to do much the Governor always created obstacles in his path On Tuesdays Dr Khan Sahib used to hold open house there were several incidents when he personally intervened without the help of the state police I think that Badshah Khan's *faquiri* (asceticism) had an effect even on Dr Khan Sahib

Did anybody from the clergy support Badshah Khan?

Several *maulanas* Obeidullah Sindhi, Abdul Aziz and others were with Badshah Khan Badshah Khan had been told by the Shaikh-ul-Hind that if he sent his men to the tribal areas he would lend financial support A lot of people volunteered, I did not go But the money was irregular in arriving and Badshah Khan used to send money from his own funds

Deoband attempted to make links with the tribal areas because they felt that the Pakhtuns in the tribal areas were a lot braver than the Pakhtuns in the Settled Districts

Badshah Khan said in 1985 in India during the Congress Centenary Celebrations, "my political life began here in Deoband"

I have narrated this conversation to you in a lightly edited form It will be my endeavour in the following section to highlight the principal features of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement and of Badshah Khan as they were portrayed through conversations such as this one

The major themes discussed in the above account are

1 Badshah Khan's leadership, his message for the Pakhtun people, his relationship and liasons with other movements of resistance in the Frontier and with those of the Indian National Congress
2 The organization of the movement, its programme and membership
3 Non-violence as strategy and ideology for the Pakhtuns
4 British reactions and their *zulm* or oppression of the people of the NWFP

5 Khudai Khidmatgars' perception of Dr Khan Sahib, elder brother of Badshah Khan and Chief Minister of the NWFP

6 The role of women in Frontier politics

I will supplement and illustrate these features with examples from conversations I had with other Khudai Khidmatgars who touched on similar themes

1 Badshah Khan's leadership had three distinct aspects — political, charismatic and spiritual He was a leader who was a keen political strategist, who could both deal with the British, and form links with the nationalist movement in the rest of the sub-continent He had a clear message for the Pakhtuns He explained to the people that the British were occupying a land which was not theirs, and that the only way in which they could be removed was by educating all Pakhtuns about this fact and by mounting a non-voilent resistance to the British Government

Fazle Karim of Pabbi said "We did not know that the British were ruling India till Badshah Khan told us so"

Dr Waris of Mardan said "Badshah Khan explained the need to boycott foreign cloth because the profit that the British made was used for arms"

Of his messages to the Pakhtuns perhaps the most significant one was that of Pakhtun identity Pakhtun society was at the time divided according to tribal and class loyalties Badshah Khan stressed the need for a united Pakhtun front and criticized the British policy of separating Pakhtuns by the Durand Line and by estranging the Tribal Areas from the Settled Districts An obvious manifestation of his influence was an increase in the number of inter-tribe marriages *Haji Saifur Khan of Baja* told me that "earlier marriages took place only within a *biraderi* But later by Badshah Khan's personal example, men made friends and cemented them with women" About Badshah Khan's charismatic appeal and spiritual power *Fazle Karim of Pabbi* said "Pakhtuns are the kind of people that one has to tie back their hands in order to stop them from fighting

Badshah Khan must have had spiritual powers to have us changed "

Dr Waris of Mardan "Our leader used to travel around in torn khadi clothes he never imposed himself on anyone he carried his own food he was like a *faquir* It did not matter whether Badshah Khan was rich or poor He had left his *khani* (affluence) behind and joined the poor "

From various accounts it emerges that Badshah Khan was close to the ordinary, poor Pakhtuns All accounts without exception mention that Badshah Khan had personally visited all the villages and all the households in the Province, on foot He is remembered to have visited places long before roads were built *Haji Abdul Wadood of Matta* informed me that "Badshah Khan used to introduce himself at meetings as 'Abdul Ghaffar' " People's initial interest in him was not because he was a great Khan but because they thought it great that this one man could stand up to the British

Maulana Hamdullah Jan, Doaba "Badshah Khan had a spiritual quality he did not care about food he was like a dervish he kept the message of the Darul-Ulm of Deoband to the end he had both a great knowledge of *Hadith* and was a great *pir* as well "

Interestingly Pakhtun people seemed to be familiar with Badshah Khan's personal habits and idiosyncrasies just as the early Muslims were with the Prophet's *Sadar Musa Khan, Chamkani* "Badshah Khan's long arms were the signs of a *wali/nabi* "

"His feet were large like that of a *powindah* (nomad) "

Haji Meherban Shah, Dagai "Badshah Khan's words unlike those of the Muslim League seemed to us sweet So we took to non-violence Talk to a Pakhtun sweetly and he will do anything Badshah Khan had formed human links that were too strong to be broken by anti-riot police " In the course of several conversations Khudai Khidmatgars said that it was his spiritual power that convinced them "We feel that he is still alive Anyone who is *shahid* is felt to be alive, just beyond mortal sight "

2 The nature of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement and its organization its network, military idiom, rigorous programme of civil disobedience and social reforms

We learn from Maulana Inayataullah's account that the movement had two wings the Jirga and the Khudai Khidmatgar The Jirga was the so-called 'civil' wing and was the decision-making body involving the literate and elders of the village The posts created in this wing were of a president, vice-president, secretary and so on

Wahidullah of Swabi "I joined the civil wing because I could read and write"

The Khudai Khidmatgar wing comprised the youth of the village who were trained into a volunteer force of non-violent soldiers

This was the organization that most of us are familiar with as the 'red shirts' The idiom of this organization was entirely military The soldiers wore uniforms of red (complete with Sam Brown belts), drills were conducted and offices of Generals, Majors, Lieutenants and so on were created *Kudrat Shah* "Bugles and drums playing both British and Pashtu tunes summoned soldiers for drills and exercises"

Jamail Mohammed Umar, Manerai, Swabi "Drill and parades were conducted only for a sense of discipline, not for war or fighting"

Nazim Sahib "Obedience was a vital factor We had the example of the Punjab Congress before us, where more than half their energies were spent in the reform of their own members Therefore Badshah Khan always kept the Khudai Khidmatgar and Congress aspects of our movement separate"

1 Elections

Gul Rahman, Pdang Elections were held, but "in military organizations there are no elections, therefore, they were held only in the Jirga"

Haji Mohammed Sher, Baja "Leaders were appointed according to the need and situation Nobody was particularly keen on holding posts In fact, the person who shield away from leadership was given the responsibility This was Badshah Khan's lesson 'Don't give it to the man who wants it' "

Membership was the highest in Peshawar district with Mardan, Bannu, Kohat, Dera Ismail Khan and Hazara following in that order

Nazim Sahib "Wherever the middle class was strong, the movement was strong Membership was proportional to economic independence The reasons for people not joining the Khudai Khidmatgar movement were because of

i) the false ideology of other parties
ii) the difference in language
iii) economic vulnerability i e those who could not afford to be away in jail "

2 Methods of Recruitment

Wazir Mohammad, Mardan "I had gone to Charsadda where my relatives refused to shake hands with me because I had not joined the movement I came back to my village and decided to set up a local wing of the movement immediately It was impossible to do this without the help of the big Khans and Amir Mohammed helped us"

Mohammad Badshah, Mardan "We organized a meeting of the movement in our village and at the very first meeting itself 300 people registered as volunteers "

Secretary Wahidullah Shava, Swabi "Our alliance with the Congress had its advantages It brought reforms Earlier only men with more than Rs 1 lakh or with lots of land were allowed to vote "

3 Non-Violence

Gul Rahman of Pdang "Badshah Khan taught us patience He said that we were at war with the British but a war without weapons Our only weapon was patience He taught us to practise non-violence at every level of our personal lives "

Ghulam Ghilani, Mardan "Before Badshah Khan feuds were settled with knives, etc, but not with guns Licences for guns were not available in the Settled Districts But Badshah Khan stopped feuds of all kinds"

Nabad Khan, Yar Hussain, Swabi "We had learnt that violence bred bad feeling and hatred My ribs have been broken by the British but I never resorted to violence We removed the British by our patience Non-violence gives a strength of mind"

4 British Atrocities

Dr Waris, Mardan Talked about the conditions of jails in the early days "The jails were overcrowded and so tents were pitched outdoors in the heat Our fetters were linked so that if one person wanted to turn over in his sleep then the entire lot of us had to a stick was placed between our knees We were made to wear orange clothes because we were branded 'Hindus' The men were castrated and stripped of their trousers so that they were in no state to go home"

Mohammed Yakub, Hathi Khel, Waziristan "Qazi Fazl Qadir died in Domel thana but the British passed a 14-year sentence on him and buried him in jail The ruthlessness extended to not even allowing the *jenaza* to be performed"

Sher Khan, Baja "When we were arrested we were publically flogged, all our goods confiscated and thrown into dirty ditches These atrocities, however, always increased our enthusiasm"

5 Perception of Dr Khan Sahib

Mohammed Badshah voiced the popular assessment when he told me that Dr Khan Sahib's ministry brought in the following reforms

- the *chowkidari* system was done away with
- *hujras* could be constructed by everybody and was no longer the special privilege of Khans
- taxes were reduced by a third

— the Shariat Act was passed in favour of women's inheritance
— gun licences for double barrelled shotguns, to be used for protection purposes, were issued
— *right to vote no longer had to be paid for*
— low castes were allowed to purchase land
— money-lenders were done away with
— low castes were made eligible for government jobs
— female education was started

6 Women

There are two reasons why women are being considered separately One, that there are very few women Khudai Khidmatgars still alive After a long search, I found one But many men I spoke to remembered incidents about women, especially when women joined the movement Though they were never a part of the decision-making process of the movement, for Pakhtun society as a whole, it was nonetheless a major breakthrough for women to come out of purdah and to join the fight to save the honour of the people *Wazir Mohammed of Mardan* relates an incident when Badshah Khan came to address a public meeting in his village The local Khan's *chowkidar's* wife made a speech and read a poem on stage He remembers that "people heckled initially, but she remained undaunted and carried on and people applauded her "

Mohammed Badshah, Mardan "In Badshah Khan's first meeting in Jamalgarhi more women than men came, but that was because of the novelty value of public meetings in our part of the world "

Haji Saifur Khan, Baja "Women were attracted to the movement because Badshah Khan had a religious message He said that in a *gulam* land Allah does not answer the prayers of a bounded people "

But the even more important point is that the women behind purdah formed a pressure group invisible to any outsider, but very powerful within the community Hurmat

Khan from the village Baja narrated me an incident when, "a young newly wed bride insisted on her groom carrying on with his picketting duties and courting arrest if the need arose, instead of staying back for the wedding night" Such incidents were described to me by a number of informants

SECTION III

The NWFP as a Zone of Transition

The NWFP has been a zone of transition between Central and South Asia, between Islam and Buddism, between Mediterranean climates and tropical monsoons, between colonialism and areas that resisted it, and more recently between a Communist State and an Islamic one Like other zones of transition elsewhere in the world, its terrain is rough and daunting, making passage through it difficult and possible only at a price

Arnold Toynbee in the Introduction to *Between Oxus and Jumna* (in Afghanistan and India respectively), makes a distinction between two kinds of geographical situations "Some of them are 'culs-de-sac' and some of them are 'roundabouts' The culs-de-sac are regions on the fringe of the Oikoumene that have received successive influences from the centre but have not been able to pass these influences onto regions farther afield The roundabouts are regions on which routes converge from all quarters of the compass and from which routes radiate out to all quarters of the compass again" (Toynbee 1961 2) Afghanistan for Toynbee is one such roundabout, a link between South-West Asia, the Indian sub-continent, Central Asia and Eastern Asia A look at the geography of this region will help us argue that it is the area right up to the Indus river valley that shares the characteristics of a 'roundabout' We then define NWFP and frontiers in general as a certain kind of region or zone, physical or ecological, geopolitical, ethnolinguistical

or cultural, and not as politically demarcated lines between states (Uberoi 1978) To explain this definition we need to recapitulate the discussion on frontiers in Uberoi's thesis Uberoi's fieldwork was conducted in the Andarab Valley of Afghanistan The frontier that he discusses and defines (i e the Hindu Kush) roughly coincides with the Frontier of the present discussion He states first that only a structural concept of frontier will enable us to make sense of the otherwise meaningless array of facts of history, of seemingly disconnected comings and goings of armies and people, things, traits and ideas The Hindu Kush, he says, not only divided the Oxus from the Indus but also simultaneously interconnected the two parts of Inner and Outer Asia into a system of interrelations "By frontier logic the wall is also a corridor and to divide is also to interconnect Thus the Hindu Kush is to be compared by analogy less to an open or shut gate than to a kind of revolving door whose equal functions in history were to separate, mutually attract and interchange the currents of inner Asia and outer Asia It was a periodic historical process of separation, encounter and exchange in different spheres of life and thought" (Uberoi 1978 73)

It is inadequate, according to Uberoi, to view the Frontier as a hem of a garment of civilization, the dependent rim or periphery of a heartland or the mere point of disjunction between other prior regions For him, a frontier culture is autonomous and not dependent or inferior, with a life and message of its own, without which civilization on either side of it could be neither separately constituted or interrelated Further he suggests that the study of Asian Frontier history can in its turn throw light on national history and some of its features

The message of the Frontier is thus of "mutuality, reciprocity and exchange it is the essential nature and diachronic rhythm of the frontier to change in time alternately from a firm dividing line into its opposite, a meeting point, and back again In that historical process the frontier periodically renews itself as well as those on

either side of it" (Uberoi 1978 75)

Whether described as Toynbee's 'roundabout' or Uberoi's 'revolving door' the above conception of the frontier is a far cry from imagining international boundaries as miles of barbed wire and sentry posts And it was this dynamic nature of the North-West Frontier that was the biggest risk to the British Empire A centralized empire like the British one in fact needed a cul-de-sac to keep other invaders, mainly the Russians and the Central Asians at bay As Toynbee says, "Roundabouts are strategic as well as economic assets, and strategic assets are tempting political prizes" (Toynbee 1961 4)

There is a need, it seems to me, for the further refinement of the analogy for frontiers Roundabouts and revolving doors explain the transitional quality but do not capture the essence of frontiers as contested zones As the history of the NWFP shows, it has been conquered and reconquered by various peoples and has been the crucial site of expeditions for several millenia The colonization of the Province by the British Empire, the playing out of the Great Game and the constant threat of Russian invasion has to be seen as part of this history It was this quality of liminality that threatened the exercise of colonial power in the Province That the British policy was much harsher here than anywhere else in the colony comes as no surprise

Conclusion

I have tried to discuss in this paper, the influence of Badshah Khan and his ideology on the Pakhtun people This has been done by a reconstruction of the life and times of rank and file Khudai Khidmatgars from their accounts of the nationalist movement in the North-West Frontier Province These accounts, gathered in 1991-92, are reminiscences of old revolutionaries of events that happened over five decades ago The attempt in this paper, therefore, is a reconstruction of historical information from individual and collective memories of Pakhtun people

Further, I have attempted to point out that the choice *of non-violent ideology by Badshah Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars might be explained by first taking into* consideration the difference in the place of legitimate violence in the British Empire and traditional Pakhtun society

Also, any understanding of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement will be incomplete without an understanding of the larger geopolitics of the Frontier region This in turn contributes to an understanding of the nationlist politics

In conclusion, I would like to share the following hypotheses with you

Non-violence was adopted by Badshah Khan as an ideology in its entirety It became his philosophy for life Would it, however, be rash to say the same for the rank and file Khudai Khidmatgar? Was their adoption of non-violence a good *strategy* in their fight against the British Government? As people who understood war, they realized that non-violence was a weapon that demanded a lot more patience but would be a success either way

What was the source of inspiration for non-violence in the Frontier? Was it a combination of Islam and Gandhi? Badshah Khan mooted the idea of Pakhtunistan and a unified Pakhtun identity in order to provide a nationalist ideal to support his anti-imperialist message Did a unified Pakhtun identity exist before Badshah Khan?

Is the current literature on the anthropology of the NWFP representative of its history?

The silence in the nationalist writings on the independence struggle in India and Pakistan after 1947 on the role of the Khudai Khidmatgars and Badshah Khan is interesting and needs to be examined further

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11

Abdul Ghaffar Khan: A Profile

Ravinder Kumar

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, popularly known as Badshah Khan, or the Frontier Gandhi, was among those truly distinguished leaders of South Asia, who led the people of the subcontinent in an epic struggle against British imperialism and won for them freedom from alien rule.

However, there are features of Ghaffar Khan's remarkable carrier as a political leader and social reformer, and as an advocate of *ahimsa*, or non-violence, drawing equally upon the traditions of Islam and the heritage of the Pakhtun people, which conferred upon him a distinctive status among the contemporary figures of South Asia. Indeed, Ghaffar Khan is comparable only to Mahatma Gandhi in the nobility of his person, in the heroic quality of his leadership, and in the profound influence which he exercised over the Pakhtuns, so much so that the centenary of his birth calls for a special exploration of his life of sacrifice, commitment and achievement.

What was the social background of Ghaffar Khan? How, if at all, was his personality related to the distinctive characteristics of the Pakhtun community from which he was drawn? To what extent was the culture of the Pakhtuns shaped by their location in the rugged north-western frontier of the Indian subcontinent? To such questions, we can add others equally worthy of exploration. If the *ahimsa* of

Mahatma Gandhi was drawn from the world-view of devotional Hinduism, then what were the moral concerns which attracted Ghaffar Khan to non-violence, and encouraged him to propagate it among the warlike Pakhtuns? How did the Pakhtuns react to the concept of *ahimsa*? and how did *ahimsa* touch and transform their interior and exterior life? Further, to what extent is the philosophical repertoire of Islam related to the notion of non-violence? Finally, what was the outcome of the political movement initiated by Ghaffar Khan, in the wider context of the struggle for freedom in South Asia? Did this movement end in 1947? Or was it to acquire a more durable shape in the life of the Pakhtun people?

I

As is well-known, Ghaffar Khan was born in 1890, in the family of Khan Behram Khan, one of the Khans or Chiefs of the Muhammadzai tribe in Pakhtun society. He was a younger son, and his elder brother, Khan Sahib, was his senior by fifteen years. Apart from the two brothers, the family was also blessed with two other children.

Behram Khan, the father of Ghaffar Khan, was a man of noble lineage who enjoyed considerable rank and status in Pakhtun society. He owned a substantial rural estate in the village of Utmanzai, on the bank of the river Swat, in Charsadda Tahsil of Peshawar district. Besides being a man of substance, Behram Khan was an individual of great piety whose lifestyle reflected the noblest traditions of the Pakhtun people. Indeed, it is clear from all accounts that the Khan and his good wife, Ghaffar Khan's mother, were a God-fearing couple, who brought up the children in a domestic environment shaped equally by Pakhtun tradition and a profound commitment to the principles of Islam. The deeply religious outlook of Behram Khan bestowed upon the entire household a gentleness of disposition, and an other worldliness, that was nevertheless unusual in Pakhtun

society Speaking of his saintly father in the fullness of his years, Ghaffar Khan vividly remembered the extent to which, unlike other men of wealth and status in the community, Behram Khan pursued a life of simple living and high thinking and interacted very little with the Deputy Commissioners, Superintendents of Police and other official functionaries who manned the system of British colonial governance in the North-West Frontier Province [1]

Yet Behram Khan's indifference to the instruments of the mighty British Raj did not stand in the way of the discharge of his responsibilities as a village and tribal elder For whenever necessary, he would espouse "the cause of the ordinary people before the Government",[2] earning in the process much goodwill and influence in his community, particularly among the humbler folk Indeed, to gain a full measure of Behram Khan's noble disposition, it is necessary to remember that in his youth, he was drawn into a serious dispute, over the division of landed property, with his elder brother This dispute, according to Ghaffar Khan, provoked a situation in which Behram Khan even faced a serious threat to his life Yet in a society deeply ravine by feuds within kinship groups and clans and tribes, and also much given to *badal*, or revenge, of which more later, Behram Khan faltered not at all in following a path of peace and affection towards his kinsmen As Ghaffar Khan observed, "When his (Behram Khan's) elder brother expired, all control over land and property devolved upon him But he did not seek revenge Indeed, he helped [those of his kinsmen] who had harmed him and treated him ill earlier" [3]

II

To gain a vivid sense of the world in which Ghaffar Khan grew up to maturity, it is necessary to say something about the social temper of and the formative influences on the fiercely independent, volatile, warlike yet intensely affectionate Pakhtun people Indeed, to understand both

Pakhtun society and a remarkable man like Ghaffar Khan, who sprang from this society, it is necessary also to gain an understanding of the Pakhtun homeland, the so-called North-West Frontier Province of the vast Indian Empire, which the British had demarcated as a distinctive territorial unit in South Asia in the years under consideration

As defined in 1901, the Frontier Province consisted of a substantial chunk of territory located between the Hindukush and associated mountain ranges to its south-west on the one hand, and the mighty river Indus on the other Inhabited by a distinctive ethnic community, the so-called Pakhtuns (or the Pathans), who spoke the Pashto language, the Frontier Province was further subdivided into two clear-cut zones a mountainous track, stretching along a north-east to south-west axis, and taking up more than sixty per cent of the surface area of the province, and a lowland track, located between the Indus and the foothills which marked the southern edge of the mountainous zone

The ecological characteristics of the Frontier Province provided a natural setting for the administrative divisions within it As already suggested, the entire north-western zone of the Province was designated as tribal territory, and it was sparsely populated by various Pakhtun tribes that were largely self-administered through the secular authority of their tribal chiefs and the moral authority of their religious leaders Despite such autonomy, colonial political agents, subordinate to the Chief Commissioner (later Lt -Governor) located at Peshawar, provided a subtle mechanism of British control over the Pakhtun tribes located in the tribal territories Needless to say, the Settled Districts — they were six in number Hazara, Mardan, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan — were controlled from Peshawar, the provincial capital, through a hierarchy of civil officers, with a Deputy Commissioner at the apex, identical to the district administration elsewhere in British India

In contrast to the mountainous and sparsely populated tribal territories, the Settled Districts of the Frontier Province

were characterized by river valleys of rich alluvial soil, capable of producing both foodgrain and cash crops, and thereby sustaining a rural economy of very considerable potential The most substantial of these valleys was that of Peshawar, which was watered by the Kabul and the Swat rivers, the latter being a tributary of the former The Doaba, or the stretch of fertile land located between the Kabul and the Swat rivers, provided the location for the most productive rural tract in the Frontier Province One of the Tahsils, or territorial divisions, of Peshawar District was Charsadda, and Utmanzai, the village home of Behram Khan, was located on the bank of the Swat river in this Tahsil

If the rugged physical environment of the Frontier Province constituted one pillar of Pakhtun society, then the social texture of the Pakhtun tribes and their cultural ethos constituted the other pillar The Pakhtuns were divided into a number of tribes, each one of which had a fairly well articulated interior structure of clans and lineages and extended family groupings Of the various tribes, the Afridis, the Mohmands, the Waziris and the Mahsuds were primarily located in the tribal belt The Settled Districts housed the Orakzais, the Usafzais, the Shinwaris and the Muhammadzais, among others As already suggested, each of the tribes contained a number of smaller social units called *khels*, which term is roughly equal to a clan

The sentiment of solidarity among the Pakhtuns was largely shaped by the fellow-feeling and goodwill located within extended families, clans and tribes Yet, as we shall later see, Pakhtun nationalism was also available as a latent force, waiting to be invoked through a call given by a charismatic leader Furthermore, despite the sentiment of kinship and tribal solidarity, the social ethos of the Pakhtuns was largely shaped by a code of honour, called the *Pakhtunwali*, or the Pakhtun way of life Indeed, *Pakhtunwali* was a corpus of social rules which, taken altogether, "embodied all those things (for the Pakhtuns) — their

national soul, (sense of) historical greatness and national tradition — which are considered basic and essential to their way of life "[4]

What were the constituents of the social code of the Pakhtuns? The first and foremost constituent was the notion of *badal*, or revenge Not surprisingly, the sentiment of revenge was often much more active within a particular clan or tribe — or even within an extended family — than it was active in relations between one tribe and another Thus, according to one scholar, those who belonged to the Afridi tribe were "so distracted by internecine quarrels that they have little time for carrying on feuds with the neighbouring tribes "[5] Indeed, the sentiment of *badal*, particularly as it reached out to and shaped conflict between cousins and collaterals, was the most destructive value afloat within the Pakhtun society The phenomenon was also referred to as *parajamba*, and the conflicting factions were called *gundis* It is clear, for instance, that Behram Khan had experienced such factional conflict within his family, over the division of landed property, as a young man It is noteworthy, however, — and Behram Khan's life story is a case in point — that it was possible to transcend factional conflict and familial violence and to transform them into a relationship which held together the kinship community in close bonds of affection

Lest we should paint too grim a portrait of Pakhtun society, it is important to remember that the code of *Pakhtunwali* also reached out to an imposing range of positive values, which conferred liberality as well as dignity and grace upon the lifestyle of the tribesmen Particularly important in this context was the notion of *malmastia*, or hospitality The Pakhtun sense of honour enjoined upon the individual, particularly upon the substantial householder, the obligation to be generous to a fault in welcoming the stranger and attending to his needs The *hujra*, or the guest house, was thus an important segment of the lifestyle of the respectable Pakhtun The extension of hospitality was

also a mechanism whereby the tribal chief extended his influence among his clansmen

Although Pakhtun society was thoroughly permeated by violence, the social code also provided for *nanavati*, or mediation, whereby conflict and violence were kept within manageable proportions in the social order *Nanavati* did not rest upon a precise set of rules Instead, a party to a conflict could turn to a mediator to help cement peaceful relations with a long-standing rival It is obvious that such an initiative rested upon a firm, though not necessarily obvious, calculation of strength, followed by an act of graceful surrender Indeed, such shrewd manoeuvres — precluding any loss of face — provided eloquent testimony to the enlightened opportunism of the Pakhtun, given the harshness of his physical environment, and the rigour of the social code which held him to the moral community of his fellows

III

Notwithstanding the austerity of the environment, even in the relatively fertile valleys of the Swat and the Kabul rivers, Ghaffar Khan grew up in a world where the high status of his family and the loving disposition of his parents, assured him an idyllic childhood, free of care and full of play Unlike his elder brother, Khan Sahib, who was studious by disposition, Ghaffar Khan was enormously fond of play and leisure, and soon grew up into a spirited youth, imposingly tall of frame, and a natural leader of his peer group at Utmanzai By the time he reached adolescence, he was sent to Peshawar for schooling in the Mission High School, run by a missionary called Rev E F E Wigram The head of the Mission High School was a gentleman of substantial learning and impeccable character, and he exercised considerable influence upon his young and impressionable pupil

While Ghaffar Khan was still at school in Peshawar, he was persuaded by a faithful old servant of the family to offer himself as a candidate for a Commission in the Frontier Guides, a paramilitary force created by the British for ensuring peace in the region His superior lineage and imposing physical stature made Ghaffar Khan an ideal candidate for such an honour, but an incident involving a close friend, who was already a Commissioned Officer, greatly disturbed his proud Pathan spirit and persuaded him to opt for an altogether different lifestyle for himself

Thereafter, Behram Khan made arrangements for Ghaffar Khan to proceed for higher studies to Great Britain, following the career course adopted by his elder brother, Khan Sahib But this, too, was not to be, largely because of the intervention of Ghaffar Khan's mother, who was distraught at the prospect of having both her sons sent overseas for studies Ghaffar, as a younger son, was a special favourite of his mother, and she could not bear the thought of being separated from him

At this juncture, the climate of nationalist politics in India, particularly as it affected the Muslim community, started exercising a decisive influence upon Ghaffar Khan Taking inspiration from an outstanding religious leader of the Frontier region, namely the Haji Saheb of Turangzai, Ghaffar Khan was drawn into organizing village schools in Peshawar and Mardan districts, with the objective of imparting education with a nationalist orientation to the rural folk The institutions of education, which he attempted to create, were quite different from the traditional schools available to the young in those times

Ghaffar Khan's involvement in social reform and educational activity, in the charged climate of North India in the years around World War I, inevitably drew him into a collision course with the British Government in India Apart from the Haji, who was fiercely anti-imperialist, he was also involved in an exchange of views with Maulana Obeidullah Sindhi, a radical Pan-Islamic scholar and activist, and Shaikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mahmud Hasan of Deoband,

a religious divine whose commitment to nationalism made him a bitter enemy of the British in India Both these individuals who were prominent in the Pan-Islamic movement within the country, drew inspiration from a profoundly religious and an equally profoundly revolutionary vision of Islam Their world-view shaped Ghaffar Khan's stance, and persuaded him to propagate through his educational institutions a radically new lifestyle, in which the attainment of freedom from alien rule was a prerequisite for the flowering of Pakhtun culture Since Behram Khan, Ghaffar Khan's father, was an established leader of the Muhammadzai tribe, the British first tried to persuade the son through his father to give up his political activities When he refused to do so, Ghaffar Khan was thrown into prison, yet both father and son refused to bow their heads before the alien rulers of the land

As is well-known, in the 1920s, the Muslim communities of India were fully drawn into the Khilafat Movement, which sought to liberate the country from British rule Ghaffar Khan, whose reform activities were religious and nationalistic in equal proportion, became part of the Khilafat upsurge Along with thousands of other Pakhtuns of the Frontier Province, he joined the *hijrat* movement, whereby thousands of Muslims migrated to Afghanistan in the belief that they could pursue in their new homeland, life of spiritual dignity compatible with the principles of Islam Yet this remarkable experiment in disassociation with anything British was soon given up since it did not hold out any promise of liberation from the stranglehold of imperialism

In a manner of speaking, Ghaffar Khan was in the 1920s still involved in the business of shaping out for himself an effective course of action, as a vehicle of the growing nationalism—wedded to the notion of a distinctive Pakhtun identity—which came to dominate his consciousness and his political agenda There were, in all, three intersecting circles of luminality that underpinned Ghaffar Khan's

emerging world-view First and foremost, there was an anti-imperialist sentiment, which looked upon the Pakhtun homeland as one of the constituents of a free and federal India, rid of alien rule Next, a Pakhtun identity, superficially fragmented into tribal and clan constituents, that needed to be drawn into a cohesive force as an integral component of the larger world of Indian nationalism Finally, there was the vision of Islam, as one of the profound moral constituents of a composite Indian culture, which was available to Ghaffar Khan, when he endeavoured to forge the Pakhtuns into a vibrant and creative community

It is important to bear in mind that Ghaffar Khan's concerns were by no means confined to purely political issues He was concerned with Pakhtun society in the round, with their social institutions, their involvement in material production, their level of social awareness, and their place in the larger Indian world He was, in other words, as much a social and ideological reformer as he was a political activist The very fact that he sought to create a network of educational institutions, as the most satisfactory means of creating a novel social consciousness in Pakhtun society, more particularly among the young, suggests that he was deeply involved in a bid to transform Pakhtun society, and that he further strove to forge it into a political instrument for the liberation of India as a whole

As Ghaffar Khan reflected upon the condition of Pakhtun society in the 1920s, in order to guage its strengths and weaknesses, several perceptions must have presented themselves to him That the Pakhtuns were a brave, courageous and highly individualistic people was something readily conceded by all and sundry Indeed, it was widely believed that no one could really enslave a Pakhtun He valued his freedom more than his life, and was willing to die rather than be made into a serf Many would-be conquerers had paid dearly for their presumption in seeking to deny a Pakhtun the right to be free Nevertheless, it was also clear to friends and foes alike that the Pakhtuns

were fragmented into antagonistic factions and cliques, which fought each other bitterly and with a disregard for the consequences of their behaviour that was frightful to behold Their incessant internal squabbling made the Pakhtuns a very vulnerable community a community which could be readily manipulated by an astute outsider

It is clear that British domination over the Frontier Province rested upon a skillful exploitation of the Pakhtuns' readiness to feud with each other To Ghaffar Khan it was, therefore, obvious that what Pakhtun society needed more than anything else was an end to inter-tribal warfare and family feuds The frightful code of *badal* had to be transformed into an ethos of brotherly solidarity If this could be achieved, then Pakhtun society would be transformed into a creative and cohesive force, providing an example of unity and vitality to other regional communities within India How the Pakhtuns could be persuaded to purge themselves of violence was, of course, an entirely different matter

At a juncture when Ghaffar Khan was searching for a mechanism whereby Pakhtun society could be purged of its violence, he stumbled upon the message of *ahimsa,* or non-violence, as formulated by Mahatma Gandhi, in response to the need for a distinctive ideology to undergird the struggle for liberation within India Gandhi's elaboration of the doctrine of non-violence rested upon some key assumptions that non-violence was the weapon of the strong rather than the weak, that non-violence transformed the oppressor by touching his conscience and drawing him into moral fellowship with the oppressed, and last but not least, that the pursuit of non-violence by different social communities ennobled their lives and provided them with the strength to battle their weaknesses All these assumptions, Ghaffar Khan was soon persuaded, were no less valid for the Pakhtuns than they were valid for the people of India as a whole

Once Ghaffar Khan had perceived the relevance of non-

violence to the 'interior' as well as the 'exterior' problems which plagued the Pakhtuns, he committed himself to the advocacy of *ahimsa* with a depth of commitment and a strength of purpose rare in the history of the nationalist movement In practice, Ghaffar Khan adopted a two-fold strategy to persuade the Pakhtuns that non-violence—as a weapon against the British, and more importantly, as a means of ridding themselves of feuds—was as relevant to their problems as it was relevant to the problems of other classes and communities within India He took every opportunity to harp upon the peaceful, as against the warlike, past of Pakhtun society, and he further argued that Islam was, above everything else, a religion of peace and non-violence In the words of Ghaffar Khan

> Our country [i e the Pakhtun homeland] has seen many cultures come and go There was a time when she was the cradle of Aryan civilisation Then the Buddha came and preached his gospel When Buddhism was spreading, our country made great progress, evidence of which can be found in the relics of that age [6]
>
> Later Islam came to this country By that time the Arabs had lost much of their spiritual light The result was that our [i e the Pakhtuns'] splendid culture was taken away from us, but they did not give us, in its place, the true spirit of Islam There were, however, some lovers of learning and seekers of God wandering through the Islamic world in search of the real Islam, who acquired scholarship in Islamic philosophy, learning, and mysticism Of this we can be truly proud [7]
>
> The fact of the matter is that the true life of a Muslim is a life of non-violence If you read about our Prophet, then it becomes clear that he never used the sword as an instrument of *jihad* [8]

IV

As Ghaffar Khan gained an understanding of the precise

location of Pakhtun society, on the one hand in the wider world of Indian nationalism, and on the other in the Pan-Islamic world of West Asia, he applied himself to the business of giving a precise political and organizational shape to the more amorphous social and educational movement which he had initiated earlier

In this context, Ghaffar Khan's visit to West Asia in 1926 played a crucial role The immediate purpose of this visit was to attend an international conference at Mecca, organized by Abdul Aziz Al Saud of Arabia To this conference came Muslim leaders from all quarters of the globe After the conference was over, Ghaffar Khan performed the Haj He then visited various West Asian countries like Syria, Iraq and Palestine These visits — and his conversations with a wide range of leaders — acquainted Ghaffar Khan with the complex problems faced by Islamic communities in different parts of the world, as these communities faced the complex challenges of modernity at the same time as they attempted to keep alive their spiritual heritage Taken in conjunction with what Ghaffar Khan had learnt from Mahatma Gandhi, of the potency of non-violence, the understanding which he gained from his visit to West Asia played a seminal role in the extension of his intellectual and political horizons It would be pertinent to remember, at this juncture, that the wide contacts which Ghaffar Khan developed in the course of his social and educational reform activities were to stand him in good stead when he returned from West Asia to adopt political activism He launched a party called the Pakhtun Jirga, or the Afghan Youth League Most of its members were young people who had been drawn to him through his educational and social work At the same time, he founded the first ever Pashto language journal, called the *Pakhtun*, which attempted to disseminate a new consciousness of nationalism and a non-violent and liberal vision of Islam

The launching of the Youth League and of a Pashto language journal met with such success, that in 1929, Ghaffar Khan took the decisive step of organizing an elite band of

volunteers, who took a solemn vow to dedicate themselves to the service of the Nation on the basis of non-violence These volunteers were called Khudai Khidmatgars (Servants of God), and in a short span of time, thousands of Pakhtuns in the Peshawar valley, and in the adjoining districts, decided to join the non-violent army created by Ghaffar Khan

Shortly after they joined the Khudai Khidmatgars, the non-violent soldiers of Ghaffar Khan faced an ordeal by fire They emerged so triumphant from this ordeal, that British rule over the Frontier Province never fully recovered from the blow which it received in the course of the civil disobedience movement of 1930

The shape of the emerging crisis, in a manner of speaking, must have been clear to Ghaffar Khan as he went to the annual sessions of the Indian National Congress in 1928 (Calcutta) and 1929 (Lahore) The younger generation of nationalists was in revolt, at this stage, against the moderation of their seniors, who looked to Mahatma Gandhi as their leader, and who believed that non-violence provided the most appropriate path to the freedom of India

The impatience of the younger generation of nationalists found in Subhas Chandra Bose, and in Jawaharlal Nehru, who presided over the Congress in 1929, their most eloquent spokesmen For the span of a full year, Jawaharlal Nehru and his associates agreed to let the senior leaders, who included Mahatma Gandhi and Motilal Nehru, negotiate the attainment of dominion status with the British rulers of the land But at the end of 1929, at the annual session of the Congress in Lahore, two momentous decisions were taken The Congress decided to fight for *Purna Swaraj* or 'Complete Independence', and Mahatma Gandhi was authorised to lead a movement of civil disobedience which would dislodge the British from India With a rare sense of the dramatics, Gandhi initiated the agitation against the British Government in March 1930, through the famous 'Dandi March' At the end of the march, he ritually manufactured salt, thus defying the laws of the then mightiest imperial power in the world[9]

The 'Dandi March' triggered off a major upsurge in the whole of India But nowhere was the resistance to British rule more determined, and more trenchantly non-violent, than in the Frontier Province At the very outset tens of thousands of Pakhtuns flocked to the standard of the Khudai Khidmatgars which organization became like a mountain stream swollen into a mighty torrent during the monsoon season The vale of Peshawar, and more specifically, Charsadda Tahsil, offered the most formidable resistance to the authority of the British Raj But elsewhere in the Settled Districts — in Banu and in Mardan — not to mention other towns, *kasbas* and villages, the Khudai Khidmatgars as well as the simple rural folk defied the will of the British Raj in a way it had never been defied before Perhaps what happened in the course of the agitation at Utmanzai, Ghaffar Khan's village home, gives a vivid sense of what happened elsewhere in the Frontier Province in this period

On May 13, 1930, at The Government besieged the village of Utmanzai while it was still dark At the break of day, the Deputy-Commissioner with the British and Indian troops entered the village Outside the village were posted eight hundred British mounted troops and one regiment of Indian Cavalry The Deputy-Commissioner went near the office of the Khudai Khidmatgars and ordered the British and the Shia soldiers to break the gate of the shop over which the said office was situated

The Deputy-Commissioner went up to the balcony and ordered the Khudai Khidmatgars, who were on duty there, to go down and take off their red uniforms They replied that they would not go down, unless ordered by their own officer, and that they all would rather die than take off their uniforms and their clothes At this Rabnawaz Khan, the Commander of Khudai Khidmatgars, ordered them to go down with cries of 'Inquilab Zindabad'

In the confusion and beating which was going on, was standing in uniform a fourteen-year boy, Wali, the second son of Abdul Ghaffar 'Who are you?', asked the Deputy-

Commissioner 'I am the son of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan', shouted back Wali The Deputy-Commissioner having abused him, a British soldier pointed a bayonet at him But a Muslim soldier who was witnessing this, pushed his hand to intervene Another British soldier, who was standing by, now advanced, but Hassan Khan, brother of Sarfaraz Khan, who was in charge of arrested persons, took the boy in his hands and jumped down to the nearby mosque and thus saved the boy

The soldiers set fire to the Khudai Khidmatgar office and ravaged the village [10]

Although the repression let loose by the British authorities ultimately undermined the agitation, there is little doubt that Ghaffar Khan and his devoted band of workers had won the hearts of the Pakhtuns What was even more creditable was the triumph of non-violence in a region of British India known for its feuding and violence

V

The depth of the civil disobedience movement in the Frontier Province demonstrated, beyond a shadow of doubt, the extent to which Ghaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars had established a firm hold over the Pakhtuns It also demonstrated that the moral heritage of Islam had been creatively interpreted by the great leader of the Frontier Province, to disseminate the notion of non-violence among the Pakhtuns, at one level, to contest British control over India, and at another level, to purge the Pakhtuns of their proclivity to violence Over and above all this, the movement of the 1930s integrated the Frontier Province into a pan-Indian nationalism, and demonstrated the solidarity of the Pakhtuns with other nationalist classes and communities in India

This brief essay on Ghaffar Khan hardly offers the space to deal at any great length with the history of the freedom struggle in the Frontier Province Yet it is necessary to

mention here that the social and political work initiated by Ghaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars paid a rich dividend, in 1937, when elections were held in the Frontier Province in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of 1935

The Congress in the Frontier Province decided to field thirty-six candidates in a Provincial Assembly of fifty seats It started with an enormous handicap, in that an executive order prevented Ghaffar Khan from participating in the elections, on the hollow plea that his "appeal has ever been not to reason but rather [to] the fanatical element in his audience's make up "[11] Not surprisingly, the Congress candidates were opposed from two directions The Muslim League had little popular appeal in the Frontier at this juncture But in the urban areas, a Hindu-Sikh alliance put up candidates against the Congress Moreover, in the rural areas the substantial landed chiefs, or the Khans, representing a traditionally pro-British element, also fielded candidates in opposition to the Congress nominees In the circumstances, it was highly creditable that the Congress won nineteen seats The League had very little success Instead, twenty-three independent candidates were elected to the assembly After a while, the Congress was able to persuade some of the minority and the independent candidates to join it in a loose political alliance As a result of this, the Congress was able to constitute a ministry in the Frontier Province, with Dr Khan Sahib, the elder brother of Ghaffar Khan, as its head

As was true elsewhere in British India, the Congress ministry in the Frontier Province resigned from office in 1939, since the British Government involved the country in World War II without consulting the people of India, or their legitimate representatives Shortly afterwards, Ghaffar Khan's profound commitment to non-violence was to be critically tested, when the leaders of the Congress met after the fall of France, on June 17, 1940, to consider a desirable course of action Despite the Mahatma and his commitment

to *ahimsa*, majority of the Congress leaders were of the view that they should extend support to the 'war effort', if the substance of freedom was extended to India

Ghaffar Khan, however, would have nothing to do with such a decision His adherence to non-violence was a matter of firm principle " the non-violence I have believed in and preached to my brethren of the Khudai Khidmatgars is much wider", he observed in tendering his resignation to the Working Committee of the Congress "Unless we learn this lesson of non-violence fully, we shall never do away with the deadly feuds which have been the curse of the people of the Frontier The Khudai Khidmatgars must, therefore, be what our name implies — servants of God and humanity — by laying down our own lives and never taking any life [12] Only Gandhi supported Ghaffar Khan at this juncture As it happened, however, the stance taken by the two votaries of non-violence, the Mahatma and the 'Frontier' Gandhi, was vindicated slightly later, when British Government made an offer to the Congress, in August 1940, which showed little inclination to respect the nationalist aspirations in India

Ghaffar Khan's most severe ordeal came after the conclusion of World War II, when the Labour Government of Clement Attlee, in Great Britain, entered into a dialogue with the leaders of India in order to secure a peaceful British withdrawal from South Asia The context to this dialogue had been set by a second round of provincial elections in 1946 The elections were preceded by a bitter campaign by the Muslim League, in the Frontier Province and elsewhere, seeking to polarise Indian society on a communal basis The leaders of the League harped upon the fact that the creation of a united India would result in the establishment of a tyrannical Hindu Raj over the Muslims, in the Frontier Province, and over the country as a whole In the face of such virulent propaganda, Ghaffar Khan conducted a peaceful election campaign on behalf of the Congress He won a magnificent victory thirty-two Congress candidates

were elected to the provincial assembly, as against seventeen representatives of the Muslim League

Yet, in retrospect, the triumph of the Congress in the elections, in 1946, in the Frontier Province — in sharp contrast to a national trend which resulted in the League bagging virtually all the seats reserved for the Muslims elsewhere — turned out to be a hollow victory The leaders of the Muslim League launched a bitter campaign against the Congress Ministry in the Frontier Province, which was headed by Dr Khan Sahib For unless this Province was controlled by the Muslim League, the objectives of Pakistan would not be realized

The battle for a united India — and for the Frontier Province as a constituent of united India — was lost on the negotiating table, rather than in an electoral contest Since various constitutional formulas failed to win the approval of the Muslim League, the leaders of the Congress agreed to a proposal that sought to divide British India into India and Pakistan, and that further recommended a referendum in the Frontier Province to decide whether it should join the latter, or the former. Ghaffar Khan was stunned at this decision For it denied all that he had stood for since he joined politics "Mahatmaji, you have thrown us to the wolves,"[13] he stated to the man whom he regarded as the embodiment of national unity in India

Yet the creation of Pakistan, in August 1947, merely marked another stage in the career of Ghaffar Khan, who stood firmly by the principles of truth and non-violence all through his life In the altered circumstances of the Pakhtun people, whom Ghaffar Khan loved so dearly, and who in turn loved him from the depth of their being, he fought consistently for their autonomy and their democratic rights, during the four decades of earthly existence left to him

How then can we sum up the remarkable career of Ghaffar Khan? "Generations to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth,[14] said the distinguished scientist,

Albert Einstein, of Mahatma Gandhi on his assassination in January 1948 What was true of the Mahatma was also true of Ghaffar Khan All through his life, he struggled valiantly to bring peace, freedom and prosperity to the Pakhtuns, and to the people of India as a whole If he did not succeed fully in what he set out to do, then the problem lay partly in the loftiness of the objectives which he had set out for himself For Ghaffar Khan was not only involved in fighting for the cause of nationalism in South Asia He also sought to create a new human being in the region Such an aspiration knows of no easy fulfillment Indeed, like Gandhi, Ghaffar Khan held before the people certain lofty ideals which constitute the core of the cultural heritage of Indian civilization The realization of these ideals is a perennial struggle for the peoples of South Asia

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